Rs 3/-

Balaji

September 1984
Oxford University Press
Bangalore

PRESENTED IN MEMORY OF
K. BALAJI SRINIVASAN

THE PRIME MINISTERS OF AURANGZEB

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Bangalore
Sept 84

LAIQ AHMAD

CHUGH PUBLICATIONS—ALLAHABAD

CHUGH PUBLICATIONS
2, Strachey Road,
ALLAHABAD—(INDIA)

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1976

Printed in India at Dandewal Publishing House and Published by Ramesh Kumar for Chugh Publications—Allahabad.

PREFACE

The study of the institution of *wizarat* was a long-felt need of our historical studies. Dr. R. P. Tripathi, formerly Professor and Head of the Department of History, University of Allahabad, attempted to study the working of the *wizarat* as an institution in the Turkish period of our history. He has traced its history upto the reign of Akbar. Since then no scholar has taken up the strings from the point where they had been left by him. While selecting the subject of my dissertation I intended to proceed on the lines laid down by Dr. Tripathi, but on the perusal of relevant material I had to change the line of treatment. I found that under Aurangzeb as earlier in the time of Iltutmish, Balban, Mohammad Tughlaq or Sher Shah or even Akbar the position of *wazir* did not improve materially. Infact, in spite of his being the highest dignitary of the state he was overshadowed by the domineering figure of the Emperor. He was at the best the head of administration and performed routine duties. In these circumstances I was left with no other alternative except that of presenting a biographical account of the *wazirs* who served the last of the great Mughals.

While conceding that the Mughal *wazir* cannot be equated with the British Prime Minister and that to designate him Prime Minister is historically misleading. I must confess that I could not find a better equivalent in English language and therefore I have called the *wazirs* of Aurangzeb as the Prime Ministers ; and for this misnomer I crave the indulgence of the scholars.

To elucidate the difference between the British Prime Minister and the Mughal *wazir*, it may be pointed out that whereas the former holds his position by virtue of the majority of his followers among the elected representatives in the house of commons, the latter was no more than a nominee of the Emperor holding his post at the sweet will of his master. But it should be remembered that even the sweet will of a despotic Mughal like Aurangzeb was conditioned by a number of relevant political considerations.

Abbreviations

Adab	Adab-e-Alamgiri
Akhbarat	Akhbarat-e-Darbar-e-Mualla
A. N.	Alamgir Namah
A. S.	Amal-e-Saleh
Badshah Namah	Badshah Namah by Abdul Hamid Lahori
Bernier	Travels in Mogul Empire
Catrou	A History of the Mughal Dynasty in India
Dil.	Nuskha-e-Dilkusha
Dow.	History of Hindustan
Elliot & Dowson	History of India as told by its own. historians
E. F. I	The English Factories in India
F. A.	Futuhat-e-Alamgiri
Hadiqa	Hadiqat-us-Salatin
Iqbal Namah	Iqbal Namah-e-Jahangiri
J. I. H.	Journal of Indian History
J. P. H. S.	Journal of Pakistan Historical Society
Love	Vestiges of old Madras
M. A.	Maasir-e-Alamgiri
M. L.	Muntakhab-ul-Lubab
M. U.	Maasir-ul-Umara
O. B. D.	Oriental Biographical Dictionary
Waris	Padshah Namah
P. I. H. C.	Proceedings of Indian History Congress
Ruqqat	Ruqqat-e-Alamgiri
R. S.	Riyaz-us-Salatin
Manucci	Storia Do Mogor.
Tavernier	Travels in India
Tuzuk	Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri
T. S.	Tarikh-e-Shah Shujai
Waqiat	Waqiat-e-Alamgiri

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1

Introductory

In the administrative set up which gradually developed in the Turkish period of our history the *Wazir* or Prime Minister occupies the central place. His status and responsibilities varied from time to time, being always determined by contemporary environments, the aptitude of the ruler and the exigency of the situation. In fact the *wazir* was an inseparable adjunct of a monarch. He was his chief counsellor, mouthpiece and the main instrument for the execution of his policies and orders. The measure of his influence on contemporary affairs depended upon his sagacity, his personal qualifications, his experiences and above all on his dexterity to deal with men and movements.

Muslim jurists have variously derived the origin of the institution. Some have traced it from the Pahlavi root-word *'vichier'* meaning 'to judge'. Some traced it from *'wazar'* meaning 'bearer of burden';[1] while others have derived it from *'wizr'* which means the king's counseller. Anyway these derivations bring into bold relief the nature and type of duties which a *wazir* was expected to perform. It was under the Abbasides that the title came into vogue.[2] In initial stages the duty of the incumbent of this title was to draft royal correspondence, but with the expansion of the empire and the consequent multiplication of administrative problems more and more of responsibility was thrown on his shoulders, till at last he came to occupy a position above that of his other compeers, which impelled the Muslim political thinkers to carefully define his powers, his duties and also the qualities which he was expected to possess.

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1. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire* by Ibn Hasan, p. 111.
2. *Mughal Administration* by Jadunath Sarkar. p. 23.

According to Fakhri the *wazir* stands midway between the sovereign and the subjects ; while Fakhr-e-Mudabbir regards him as "a partaker in sovereignty" without whom no state can be stable and prosperous. We find an echo of the same idea in the words of Humayun Shah Bahmani who is said to have remarked that "sovereignty and dominion cannot attain the pinnacle of their height without the help and cooperation of a *wazir*, whose wise deliberations result in promoting the welfare of the country and the prosperity of the people". Indeed, there is no dearth of examples where a sovereign owed his success to the fidelity, wisdom, ability and farsightedness of his *wazir*. Since a *wazir* enjoyed unique privileges and was expected to perform multitudinous duties, he was required to possess correspondingly distinctive qualities. These have been aptly set forth by Hidayet Ullah Behari and Haji Khair Ullah in their treatises named "*Hidayet-ul-Qawaid*" and "*Dastur-e-Jahankusha*"[1], respectively. Hidayet's remarks are deserving of quotation :

"He (*wazir*) should be well versed with the laws of the country sweet-tongued, cultured and amicable in his behaviour. He should attend to the grievances of the high and the low. He should always be strict in his words with the *zamindars*, he should try to maintain cordial relations and should keep an account of the income and expenditure of the empire. He should also have a knowledge of the forts of the empire, so that at the time of forwarding the despatches or presenting an account of the different *mahals*.[2] he could apprise the emperor conveniently about them."[3]

During the early Sultanate period the name of Junaidi stands out very prominently. He was followed by Muhazzabuddin[4] after whose fall the powers of the *wazir* were usurped by other officers. Balban as a chief adviser of Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud was styled

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1. "*Dastur-e-Jahankush*" by Haji Khair Ullah, ff. 49a-b.

2. *Mahal* : A section in revenue sense i.e. 'a parcel or parcels of land separately assessed for revenue.

3. "*Hidyayet-ul-Qwaid*" by Hidayet Ullah Behari, f. 7b.

4. *Foundation of Muslim Rule in India* by A. B. M. Habibullah, p. 117.

'*Naib-e-Mumlikat*'. In the later part of Alauddin's reign Kafur was styled as '*Malik Naib*'. Khwaja Jahan Ayaz and Khan-e-Jahan Telengani were very powerful *wazirs* under the Tughlaqs. Under the Sayed rulers the *wazir* became pre-eminently a military officer and at times he played the role of king-maker. In the feudal-despotic regime of the Lodis the position of the *wazir* lost its importance. Bahlul probably had no *wazir*. But his son Sikandar who organised the central structure of government appointed Malik Bhuwa as his *wazir*. He continued to hold this post under Ibrahim. But his powers were confined to financial control only. Dr. R. P. Tripathi has aptly remarked that "the Wazir continued to remain in obscurity even in the second Afghan empire."[1] In fact, the Afghan period was very unpropritious for *wizarat* and though the institution did not entirely disappear, it became weak and insignificant.

The position however changed under the Chaghtai Mughals. Their outlook on politics and administration was different. They were the legatees of a complex tradition and of mixed conventions. The contemporary model for them to imitate was not that of the Abbasides but that of the Safawids. Moreover, being men of learning and erudition they were also familiar with juristic literature. They developed their own theory of kingship. While conceding that the administrative set-up in its final composition was not completely divorced from the past, in its contents it took into account the new political trends and immediate requirements. It was novel not in the sense that it had not been practised in the past, it was new in the sense that it took into cognizance the existing present.

In his sporadic life of success and failure Baber had perhaps little time to further the process of evolution of the institution of *wizarat*. In the beginning of Kabul period Baqi Chaghaniani was his right hand man, virtually a *wazir* ; but he was dismissed by his master on eleven charges.[2] Thereafter there is no mention of any one influential minister or officer who may be compared with the Prime Minister. Later on, when Baber visited Sultan Husain Baiqra and

1. *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration* by R.P. Tripathi, p. 193.
2. *Babur Namah*, Eng. Tr. Beveridge, I, p. 250.

came in touch with a properly organised administrative system, he was deeply impressed with it. He writes, "Of the *wazirs* of Sultan Husain Mirza one was Majduddin Mohammad, the son of Khwaja Pir Mohammad Khwafi, who was the chief counsellor in the *diwan* of Shah Rukh Mirza. Before his time, the *diwan* of Sultan Husain Mirza was conducted without regularity or method and the greatest disorder prevailed."[1] This statement shows that in the Timurid administrative organisation the word '*diwan*' was used for a department and the individual in its charge was called *wazir*. Perhaps the *diwan* indicated the revenue department.

But Baber had no aptitude for organising his administration according to any well-defined plan. He did very little in this direction during his twenty years' regime in Kabul ; whereas during his brief sojourn in India he was too preoccupied to give any thought to the problem. But towards the end of his life Khalifah did rise to the position of chief minister. Very little, however, is known about his antecedents except that he actively participated in the battles of Panipat and Khanwa and accompanied Baber in his Bihar and Chanderi expeditions. It is not clear on what authority Dr. R. P. Tripathi has concluded that "Nizamuddin Khalifah was the political and financial head of the government."[2] His military talents may be conceded, but there is hardly any evidence of his financial acumen. That he was an influential noble cannot be denied.

In the early part of his reign Humayun reposed full confidence in Amir Wais Mohammad and later on in Hindu Beg, who in the words of Abul Fazl was entrusted with the task of "shutting and opening, binding and loosing of the great affairs of officers and wazirs and of all government clerks etc." After his return from Persia to Kabul the emperor favoured Qarjah Khan who enjoyed the status and power of *wazir*. But in 1545, he decided to curtail his powers. He deprived him of control over finances and limited his

1. *Babur Namah*, Eng. Tr. Beveridge, I, p. 281.

2. *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, pp. 113-114.

authority to administrative matters.[1] This step involved far-reaching consequences. Indirectly, it imparted some shape to the institution of *wizarat* and the position of *wazir* in the later period. At the moment, however, this measure was undertaken to maintain a balance between two different groups and to keep the *wazir* under control. In 1546 Qarjah Khan attempted to recover his lost position, by planning the assassination of Khwajah Sultan Mohammad Rashidi who held the direction of financial affairs. Humayun had no other alternative but to acquiesce with the consequences of the tragedy[2]. But in 1547 he made another attempt to curtail the influence of Qarjah Khan by appointing Khwajah Ghazi to the post of *Mushrif-e-Diwan* who was to be independent of *Wakil*. Not only this, Humayun himself began superintending the work of these two different departments of administration. This was resented by Qarjah Khan who wanted to replace Khwajah Ghazi by Khwajah Qasim, *Diwan-e-Buyutat*.[3] Finding the sovereign adamant, Qarjah Khan and his supporters abandoned the cause of their master and deserted to Kamran in Badakhshan. It was after the peace of Taliqan in 1548 that Khwajah Qasim was appointed *wazir*, but only for a short period. Smarting under a sense of humiliation Khwajah Ghazi now attempted to overthrow his rival but Qasim and Khwajah Mirza Beg, the new *diwan* charged him with corrupt practices and at their instance Humayun dismissed him. The dismissal of Khwajah Ghazi, however, effected no improvement in situation. Qasim Khan's affiliation with the pro-Kamran clique brought about his fall. His place was taken by Khawjah Sultan Ali. But Qarjah Khan and Khwajah Qasim continued to be active in their designs and it was in 1551 that Humayun inflicted a blow to their soaring ambitions by defeating them at Ushturgram. He seized them and put them to death.[4]

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1. Iqtidar Alam's paper entitled "*Wizarat* under Humayun 1545-1555", P. I. H. C. 1960, pp. 248-49.

2. *Ibid*.

3. *Diwan e-Buyutat* : It was the title of an officer who registered the property of deceased persons, in order to secure the payment of the dues of the state as well as to safeguard the property of the heir of the deceased. For details see, *Mughal Administration*, pp. 52-54.

4. Iqtidar Alam's paper, op. cit.

From 1551 to 1556 Khwajah Sultan Ali continued to function as *wazir* of the *Tanfiz* type.[1]

The opening years of the reign of the new emperor Akbar marked a change in the institution of *wizarat*. The sovereign being a minor, his *Ataliq*.[2] and *Wakil-us-Saltnat*[3] Bairam Khan exercised extensive powers and controlled all the affairs of state[4]. His five years dominance brings into bold relief an intensive feature in the constitutional history of Northern India.[5] Indeed he possessed all the power of a *wazir* as enumerated in the works of Al Mawardi. He was *wakil* as well as *wazir*. As *Wazir-e-Tafwiz*[6] he appointed and dismissed high officers according to his will and at times he did not even care to consult the young sovereign.[7] He appointed Pir Mohammad Nasir-ul-Mulk as his *naib* (deputy) to look after the revenue and financial matters and Sheikh Gadai as the head of the ecclesiastical department. He awarded *jagirs* in his own discretion and thus gave umbrage to his master who complained that his servants were being neglected by the *wakil*.[8] Further, he also began sitting in a *Diwan-e-khas* twice a week, giving decisions on civil and military matters. He very often faced his master with the *fait accompli*.

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1. *Wazir-e-Tanfiz* : He simply carried out the orders of the Sovereign. It was not within his competence to initiate a policy or to do anything on his own responsibility. He was merely the intermediary between the ruler and the people.

2. *Ataliq* : A tutor or guardian.

3. *Wakil-us-Saltnat* : The title of the highest ranking officer in Mughal administration.

4. Abul Fazl mentions : "Bairam Khan, who regarded himself as the unique of the age in regard to courage, administrative abilities, devotion and sincerity, and who in consequence of a crowd of flatterers had got the belief that the affairs of India could not be managed without him, took, from the bad advice of shortsighted associates, the path of destruction, and did shameful deeds, such as should not have come from him " See, *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, II, p. 138.

5. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 121.

6. *Wazir-e-Tafwiz* : He wielded all the Sovereign power on his own initiative and was only required to inform his Sovereign of all he had done.

7. *Islamic Polity* by P. Saran, p. 96.

8. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge II, pp. 162-163.

He went to the length of interfering with the personal matters of *Padshah*. For instance, he opposed his marriage proposal with the daughter of Mohammad Abdullah Khan Mughal and it was only when Nasir-ul-Mulk brought home to his mind that the step was tantamount to indiscretion that he yielded and gave his consent to it.[1] Undoubtedly he had rendered invaluable services to Humayun and Akbar in various ways and on various occasions but his ambition, shortsightedness, lack of tact and statesmanship and his failure to win the confidence of sovereign or of the nobility and public not only caused a great apprehension inside the *harem* but also outside, which ultimately brought about his downfall.

With bitter experience of Bairam Khan's dominance, and with the background of the institution of *wizarat* during the three hundred years of the Turkish rule Akbar, shrewed as he was, made up his mind to define the powers and functions of the incumbent of this office vis-a-vis his position in the empire. Immediately after dismissing his regent Bairam Khan, Akbar also separated finance from general administration and placed it under the control of Shihabuddin, the governor of Delhi.[2] And to put a check upon his authority he associated Maham Anga with him. After this he uniformly followed the principle of "checks and balances" and "separation of powers."

When Munim Khan arrived from Kabul, he was given the title of *Khan-e-Khanan* and the office of *Wikalat* but at the same time Shamsuddin Atka Khan was given the standard, drum and *tuman tugh*[3] of Bairam Khan. In this way the powers and the distinctions formerly enjoyed by Bairam Khan were evenly divided and shared by three different persons namely Shihabuddin Khan, Munim Khan and Shamsuddin Atka Khan.[4] Munim Khan was disappointed and he joined hands with Maham Anga and began to brew his own

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1 *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, II, pp. 162-163 ; *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 123.

2. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, II, pp. 143-144 ; *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 125.

3. *Tuman tugh* : A kind of Standard.

4. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 125 ; *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration* p. 200.

designs. A few months later, Atka Khan petitioned the emperor that in consideration of his past services he expected the office of *Wikalat* along with its ancillary distinctions. Upon this the Emperor appointed him *wakil* as well as *wazir*. The motive behind this step was to counter the growing influence of Maham's clique. But the latter could ill-afford to swallow the bitter pill and the impetuous Adham Khan in a fit of rage and rashness one day entered the *Daulat Khanah* along with his followers, attacked Atka Khan and put him to death.[1] But the blood of Atka Khan brought no advantage to the party. On the contrary, it sounded its death-knell. The dare-devil was thrown down the battlements, his mother Maham Anga died struck with grief and Munim Khan and Shihabuddin Khan fled from the court.[2] All this, in effect, strengthened the hands of the sovereign who could now control the state offices as he liked. He had experimented with many plans and several men but he was not satisfied. He wanted to dictate, he could not brook dictation. Although he pardoned Munim Khan and made him *wakil* again, the post was now shorn of all dignity or power associated with it. In its new shape the *wakil* was reduced to the position of an humble servant of the emperor expected to execute the latters's instructions. But the problem had not yet been fully resolved. It was impossible for the sovereign to perform multifarious duties single-handed. He had to utilise the services of a band of officers, but not without satisfying himself of his bonafides and the worth. Two spheres of work demanded his immediate attention, finances and administration. The basic issue before him was to combine them or separate them. At the same time, he was fully conscious of the risk of allowing a single officer gathering power in his hands. And in this lies the genesis of the evolution of the powers of *diwan* and the corresponding decline of the status of *wakil*.

In the 8th year of his reign i.e. 1564 Muzzaffar Khan was appointed as *diwan* and the revenue and financial matters were taken away from the control of *wakil*. Henceforward continuous efforts

1. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, II, p. 269 ; *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 126.

2. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, II, pp. 272-73.

were made to raise the status of *diwan*, perhaps because finance was the key of administration. Therefore, when in 1564 the emperor was leaving for Malwa expedition he took with him Munim Khan and left the affairs of government in the hands of Muzzaffar Khan and Khwajah Jahan.[1] This gave an opportunity to the *diwan* to have a free hand in performing the duties entrusted to him. Subsequently when in IIth year of his reign, Akbar went to the Punjab to suppress the rebellion of Mirza Hakim, he left Munim Khan at the capital, but on this occasion he clearly defined the functions of *wakil* and *diwan*. He did not like that they were to act independently but to ensure a sense of harmony between them, he associated Khwajah Jahan with them.[2]

But the presence of the three ministers vested with equal powers created some complications. Khwajah Jahan considered himself to be superior to his other two colleagues. This is evident from the fact that while they were conducting negotiations for peace with Ali Quli of Karah[3] Muzzaffar Khan became suspicious of the double dealings of Khwajah Jahan and Munim Khan. He reported against them to the emperor. This gave another setback to the prestige of *wakil*. The partisans of Munim Khan were duly punished and his other colleague Khwajah Jahan faced no trouble.[4] Shortly after the conclusion of Ali Quli's episode, Munim Khan was given a *jagir* in Jaunpur and was commanded to look after the affairs of the east. He left the capital in the 12th year of the reign and remained in the eastern region till the end of his life. Although he continued to enjoy his rank and position, his career as the *wakil* of the empire had come to an end. Being far away from centre, he lost touch with the court. Virtually he had been reduced to the rank of an ordinary governor.

After the eclipse of Munim Khan, Akbar took some decisive steps to improve the position of *diwan*. In effect, the *wakil* had

1. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, II, p. 350 ; *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 127 ; *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, p. 201.

2. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, II, p. 411 ; *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, pp. 127-28.

3. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, II, p. 401.

4. *Ibid*.

ceased to exist. During the next seven years revenue and finance remained outside his control and no person from the old school was appointed to look after the affairs of the *Diwan-e-Wizarat*. In this context the considerations which prompted Akbar to appoint Muzzaffar Khan[1] to the post of *diwan* are deserving of attention. He had worked under Bairam Khan, he was for a time a *parganah* officer and finally as the *Diwan-e-Buyutat*, he had acquired sufficient knowledge of revenue administration and the working of the Central government.[2] Before being appointed as *diwan* he had served under Munim Khan in the same capacity.

In the 12th year of his reign when Munim Khan was finally transferred to Bengal Akbar seized the opportunity of raising the status of *diwan* and established his position firmly. Upto this stage the ministry consisted of three persons who enjoyed equal status and powers. But now Muzzaffar Khan was made an independent minister and *diwan* without any *wakil* over him. But the arrangement lasted only for one year. The growing empire increased the volume of work in corresponding proportion. Therefore the department of the *wizarat* was divided into two sections each under a separate minister. They were respectively disgusted as *Diwan-e-Khalsa*[3] and *Diwan-e-Tan*.[4] While Muzzaffar Khan looked after the affairs of the latter, Shihabuddin another noble was placed independently incharge of *khalsa* land.[5] Such a curtailment of his power and influence naturally annoyed Muzzaffar Khan who was hardly given an opportunity to give proof of his talents. So his relations with the Emperor were gradually strained and he finally fell out of favour in the 17th year

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1. '*Khan*' was his title which was given by the emperor Akbar.

2. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, II, pp. 305-06,

3. *Diwan-e-Khalsa*: *The Diwan of Crownlands*; For his duties see, *Mughal Administration*, p. 35.

4. *Diwan-e-Tan*: The Diwan of Salaries , For his duties see, *Mughal Administration*, p. 39.

5. *Akbar Namah*. Bev., II, p. 488; *Khalsa* land were those "lands held immediately of government and of which the State was the manager or holder." [*A Calander of Oriental Records*, Ed. by Prof S.A. Rashid, Govt. *Central Records office Allahabad*, Vol. II, p. 96.]

of the reign. But during the period he held his post, he acted as *diwan* or the Prime Minister of the empire.[1] It was at his recommendation that persons were appointed to high posts.[2] It was at his instance that a number of reforms were introduced in the department of revenue. Soon he came to be considered as one of the most influential officers of the empire. His growing popularity irked the emperor, and to bring home to his mind that he was not indispensable, he removed him from his post and sent him away as governor of Malwa. But in the following year the combined office of *Wikalat* and *Diwani* was conferred on him. It is difficult to discover any specific reason for this sudden change in the attitude of the emperor. May be that he had realised his worth. But when he refused to carry out reforms in the *jagirdari* system specially the branding of horses, he was again compelled to step down.

The post of *diwan* remained vacant for the next two years, though for a while Todar Mal looked after the affairs of this department and was designated as *Mushrif-e-Diwan*.[3] But when, he was transferred to Bengal to afford assistance to Khan-e-Jahan the post again fell vacant. Shihabuddin was in charge of the *khalsa* land and was also an experienced officer was not given a chance to hold the post of *wazir*. In the 21st year of his reign Akbar appointed Khwajah Mansur Shirazi an expert financier as diwan.[4] He held the post for next three years (21st to 24th year of the reign). When Raja Todar Mal returned from Bengal he was again given the charge of the office of deputy *diwan*. Shortly after, Muzzaffar Khan was summoned to court and in recognition of his splendid services in the east was honoused with the office of *Wikalat*.[5] With his arrival at court, it became

1. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, pp. 151-52.

2. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, by Abdul Quadir Badauni, II, p. 71.

3. "A post higher than that of *Diwan* but lower than that of *wakil*." See, *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, p. 203.

But Abul Fazl says that "he (Raja Todar Mal) enjoyed virtually the position of a Vakil." See, *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, III, p. 561.

4. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, III, pp. 273, 431.

5. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, pp. 130, 154.

absolutely necessary to issue fresh regulations defining the jurisdiction and duties of Khwajah Mansur Shirazi and Todar Mal. Muzzaffar Khan was directed to look after the general affairs of the empire whereas the other two were separately required to look after the administration of *Diwan-e-Tan* and *Diwan-e-Khalsa.* They were required to perform their normal duties in consultation with Muzzaffar Khan.[1] But such an arrangement could hardly be expected to continue for long because of the assertive nature of Muzzaffar Khan and Todar Mal. Add to this the ambition of the former to play the combined role of *wazir* and *wakil* and his keen desire to exercise control over both the key-branches of administration. Despite their differences, they rendered distinguished service in the field of revenue administration. The position of *wazir* or *diwan* remained unimpared mainly because of the cool and calculating nature of Khwajah Shah Mansur. Later on, the three members of the ministry accompanied the Emperor in his tour to the Punjab, where a council was held and decisions were taken on certain important matters.[2] On this occasion it wa decided that (a) the *Sarkars* of Bihar should be assigned to the officers in *jagirs*, (b) that the charge of mints should be taken away from the *chaudharis*[3] and be placed under the direct control of the ministry. Muzzaffar Khan was to supervise the Lahore mint ; Raja Todar Mal-Bengal mint; Khwajah Mansur-Jaunpur mint; Asaf Khan-Patna mint and Abdul Samad-Fatehpur Sikri mint. This arrangment added considerably to the work of *Diwan-e-Wizarat.* Besides this, other responsibilities were also thrown on the shoulders of the officers. For instance, Khwajah Mansur was associated with Muzzaffar Khan, the *wakil* to enquire into the case of an *amal guzar*[4] of Delhi

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1. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, III, pp. 199-200 ; *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire.* p. 130: *Islamic Polity*, p. 96.

2. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, III, pp. 310-74 ; *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire* , pp. 154-55.

3. '*Chaudhari*' was an important official at the *Parganah* level and was associated with the local land-revenue administration in more ways than one.

See, *Land Revenue Administration under the Mughals* by N A. Siddiqi, p. 90.

4. '*Amal guzar*' was an head of *Parganah* administration ; See *Land Revenue Administratian under the Mughals*, op. cit, 80,

against whom the public had submitted a representation.[1] Raja Todar Mal was sent against the Afghans; while Muzzaffar Khan and Birbal were deputed to enquire into the condition of the people of Jalandhar.[2]

The duty entrusted to the *Wakil* Muzzaffar Khan was considered by him to be below his dignity and he expressed his resentment at the secondary position assigned to him.[3] Consequently in the 22nd year, he was appointed governor of Bengal and a few months later Raja Todar Mal was sent to Bihar. These two postings cleared the way for Khwajah Mansur, the *diwan*. He was now in a position to exercise his powers effectively and impart financial stability to the Empire. He reduced the allowance of Bihar and Bengal army and ordered payment of arrears. But his reforms provoked much opposition and he was removed from his post. In his place Wazir Khan, the former governor of Gujrat was appointed *diwan* and Khwajah Qazi Ali was associated with him.[4] But the allegations of corrupt practices against the latter (though on investigation found to be baseless) tarnished his image and he could not be retained in office.[5] As to Khwajah Shah Mansur, thanks to machinations of his rivals, he was charged with high treason and put to death. Now Qulij Khan was appointed *diwan*. He was noted for his administrative ability and his interest in the welfare of the people.[6] He held the post for two years. He made room for Raja Todar Mal who returned from Bengal in the 27th year of the reign.

The Raja was honoured with the title of *Ashraf-e-Diwan*,[7] and he held this post upto the 30th year of the reign. During this period he introduced a large number of revenue reforms. In the 30th year

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1. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge., III, p. 360.
2. *Ibid.*, p 357.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 427-28.
4. *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, II, p. 287; *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, pp.156-57.
5. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge., III. p. 480.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 504-05.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 561.

of his reign, however, Akbar effected another change in the *diwani* by including Mir Fathullah Shirazi in the ministry. According to the new scheme the Raja was to conduct the financial and administrative affairs in consultation with Mir Fathullah and the latter was to dispose off old cases which had been pending since Muzzaffar Khan's time.[1]

This arrangement very likely was motivated by the desire of the Emperor to enforce his principle of 'checks and balances' and to see his highest officers working in a team spirit coordinating their talents and efforts in the interest of administration. His expectations were fulfilled beyond measure. The joint efforts of the Mir and the Raja infused a new energy and imparted a new base to the revenue department. The reforms, which they introduced were of far-reaching importance. But death of the Mir in the 34th year and of the Raja soon after, deprived the Emperor of his ablest *wazirs*. Abdul Fazl's remark that "The market of business lost its briskness"[2] sums up the qualities and achievements of the two great revenue reformers and financiers of the age.

During the next sixteen years Akbar tried many officers but found none of them fit enough to shoulder the burden of the high office of *diwan*. Khwajah Shamsuddin Khwafi[3] (34th to 43rd regnal year=9 years), Rai Patra Das[4] (43rd to 44th regnal year=1 year), Asaf Khan Qazvini[5] (44th to 49th regnal year=5 years), and Wazir Khan[6] (49th to 50th regnal year=1 year) succeeded one after other but failed to impress the sovereign. Ultimately he directed Prince Salim to supervise the work of this department. The *diwan* was to act in accordance with his advice. The seal of the Prince was to be affixed on all grants to the *mansabdars*.[7]

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1. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 161.
2. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge. III., p. 862.
3. In 1589, Khwajah Shamsuddin was raised to the office of Diwan. *Akbar Namah*, Beveridge, III, p. 864.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 1108.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 1134.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 1249.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 1257.

Thus during half of a century of Akbar's reign various experiments were made to finalise the position and define the responsibilities of *wazir*. The Emperor was however, averse to see power concentrating either in the hands of *wakil* or *diwan*. For this reason sometimes, the one and at others, the other came into prominence. Frequently, the device to associate *diwans* was also tried. But no single individual rose to the high expectations of the Emperor, which fact mainly accounts for quick transfers and successions in the post of *diwan*. It is, however, clear that the *wazir* and *diwan* became synonymous terms, though it is doubtful if there had yet emerged into an officer like the Chief Minister. Even so the *diwan* came to be elevated to a position of supreme importance, because he controlled the financial strings of the empire.

Jahangir, very much like his father, did not allow any one individual to gather authority into his own hands and to overshadow the sovereign. In this context Ibn Hasan has aptly remarked that "None of the later *wakils* appears to have regained that power and influence which a Prime Minister under an absolute monarchy is expected to wield."[1] Upon his accession to the throne, Jahangir confirmed Wazir Khan in the post of *Wizarat* and allowed him to enjoy the same rank and title as he had held in the preceding reign. But soon after Khan Beg was honoured with the title of *Wazir-ul-Mulk* and was associated with him. As Wazir Khan was not found useful, he was transferred to Bengal[2] but the title of *wazir* was not taken away from him. Fifteen days after, when Sharif Khan waited upon the Emperor, the latter appointed him as *wazir* and promoted him to the rank of 5000 *zat*/5000 *sawar* and conferred upon him the lofty title of *Amir-ul-Umara*.[3]

Thus in the early part of Jahangir's reign the *wizarat* was held by *Amir-ul-Umara* Sharif Khan who shared his work with *Wazir-ul-Mulk*

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1. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 132.
2. *Tuzuk*, Eng Tr. Rogers, I p. 13.
3. *Ibid*, p. 14.

Khan Beg and Itmad-ud-daulah.[1] Had he not fallen ill in the second year of the reign, he would have certainly endeavoured to revive the prestige of the office he held. But, before he could recover his health, Emperor had appointed Asaf Khan to the post of *wazir* in 1606 and promoted him from the rank of 2500 to 5000 and made him the guardian of Prince Parviz.[2]

It appears that two considerations weighed with the Emperor in appointing Asaf Khan as *wazir*. In the first place, he was impressed with his intelligence, and secondly, he could not ignore his brilliant record of service in the preceding reign. He had earned reputation for his administrative acumen and his scholarly pursuits. After he had recovered his normal health, Sharif Khan came to court fondly hoping that the emperor would restore to him his former title and status, but the emperor saw no valid reason to alter the arrangements he had already made. But in 1609 and 1610 both Asaf Khan and Sharif Khan were deputed to the Deccan where they remained until their death. Thus they were not allowed to return to the capital to become *wazirs*. According to Ibn Hasan, "One was shifted for reasons of health and other for lack of confidence"[3] But there were other and more cogent reasons which occasioned a radical change in the key-post of the government. Before examining these reasons it is essential to point out that, the year 1609-10 marks the end of first period of Jahangir's reign in more than one respect.

The features of this period vis-a-vis the *wizarat* were, firstly that the emperor like his predecessor made free use of his discretion while appointing his *wazir*; and secondly, that he did not confer this post on any high ranking noble. Asaf Khan was an exception, but soon he was sent away to the Deccan and deprived of his status. Nor could it be filled by any noble or military commander who possessed specialised knowledge of revenue administration and had full acquaintance with office routine

1. *Iqbalnama*, p. 55.
2. *Tuzuk*, Rogers, 1, p. 16.
3. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 133.

in addition to literary accomplishment. Jahangir, like his father, continued the practice of joint office holders, but with this difference that, while Akbar had divided the office work between the two colleagues, Jahangir divided the working according to the political divisions of the empire. But due to quick changes in incumbents, none of the *wazirs* was able to dominate over the Emperor and Jahangir had a free hand in every sphere of administration.[1] But the situation changed after 1611 and the position of the *wazir* or *diwan* began gradually taking a new turn.

In 1611 Jahangir married Nur Jahan,[2] which event marks the beginning of the glorious period of his reign. It lasted until the end of the year 1621. The matrimonial relationship between the royal family and the family of Itmad-ud-daulah proved very beneficial to either party. It was quite natural for the Emperor to make full use of the talents of the relations of the Queen. Consequently to make room for Itmad-ul-daulah, Khawajah Abul Hasan, the acting *diwan* was sent to the Deccan and the former was appointed as *diwan*. But the elevation of Itmad-ud-daulah should not be attributed only to his new relationship with the Emperor; it was also due to his personal qualities, literary accomplishment and the administrative talents. He had gained sufficient experience of the working of the revenue department. Next to Amir-ul-Umara Sharif Khan and Asaf Khan, he was the seniormost member in the ministry. Hence the office was conferred upon him. His predecessor Khwajah Abul Hasan had occupied the post of *diwan* only in a temporary capacity. But there were two other members of the nobility whose claim could have been considered for the coveted post. They were Abdul Rahim Khan-e-Khanan and Khan Jahan Lodi. Both of them had put in many years of service in the imperial cause. They had been recipient of many favours and honours. Khan-e-Khanan was the Emperor's old tutor and had held the office of *wikalat* for some time during the reign of Akbar. From 1605 to 1610, he had

1. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 175.
2. *Iqbal Namah*, P. 56 ; *History of Jahangir* by Beni Prasad, P. 162

served in the Deccan as viceroy. His loyalty and devotion towards the ruling family, his position, rank and status entitled him to high honours. But his failure in the Deccan and the manoeuvring of rival group completely clouded his prospects. Nor was he in the good books of the new Queen. As regards Khan Jahan Lodi, though he was a favourite of the Emperor, he had picked up a quarrel with the new 'junta' which had come into prominence. Jahangir gave him a chance to prove his worth, but he miserably failed in the Deccan. Moreover, being an Afghan his promotion would have been resented as much by the Persians or by the Timurid Turks. Thus Itmad-ud-daulah remained the only choice for the Emperor.

During the following eleven years Itmad-ud-daulah held the main strings of revenue administration and he was repeatedly promoted in recognition of his meritorious record of service. In 1611 he held the rank of 1500 only, but within a year he got two increments which gave him the rank of 2000/500[1]. In 1612 his rank was raised to 4000/1000[2], in 1614 to 5000/2000[3], in 1615 to 6000/3000[4]; further he was given standard and drums, and the permission to beat them at the court; in 1616 his rank was raised to 7000/5000 and he was accorded the privilege of having his drums beaten after those of Prince Khurrum, and he was also given *Tuman-tugh*.[5] In 1619 his rank was further raised to 7000/-7000.[6] From the point view of his status he may be compared to Bairam Khan, and it may be presumed that in matters of appointment of generals, equipment of army, transfers, fresh appointment of provincial governors his voice carried weight.

From the few instances which are quoted here, we may form some idea with regard to the position of the *wazir* vis-a-vis his

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1. *Tuzuk*, Rogers, I, p. 199; *History of Jahangir*, p. 172.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 217.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 260.
4. *Ibid.*, p , 280.
5. *Ibid.*, p , 320.
6. *Tuzuk*, Rogers, II, p. 117.

powers. In the 10th year of the reign when Nur Jahan's party was at the height of its influence, it was at the request of Itmad-ud-daulah that Diyanat Khan was released from the fort of Gwalior and his property was restored to him.[1] Likewise at his request Raja Man Singh was appointed to command an army against the fort of Kangra In the 12th year of the reign on his request Allahdad Khan, who had fled from the army without permission, was allowed to return to the court. The same year on his request Itiqad Khan was allowed to perfom *Kornish*.[2] Had he not enjoyed full confidence and real powers, he would have not been able to give either peace or prosperity, which the empire enjoyed during these twelve years.

That Itmad-ud-daulah had inherited a rich legacy of experience cannot be denied. By the time he was called upon to fill the much coveted post, *wizarat* had developed into a well-organised institution. In routine matters normally there was no need for reference to the Emperor. As the *diwan* was vested with full powers, it had become unnecessary for others to approach the emperor over his head. Nor were there any strains in the *wizarat* department necessitating royal interference. In short, during the period of his incumbency Itmad-ud-daulah played his role as the sole *wazir* of the Mughal empire. Jahangir's remark on his death (January 1622)[3] fully illustrates this point. He writes, "though the weight of such a kingdom was on his shoulders and it is not possible for or within the power of a mortal to make everyone contended, yet no one ever went to Itmad-ud-daulah with a petition or on business who turned from him in an injured frame of mind. He showed loyalty to the sovereign, and yet left pleased and, hopeful him who was in need"[4].

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1. Jahangir writes that "at the request of Itmad-ud-daulah I had sent for Diyanat Khan, who was in the fort of Gwalior, and he had the good fortune to pay his respects; the property which had been confiscated was restored to him." *Tuzuk*, Rogers, I, p. 303.

2. *Tuzuk*, Rogers, I, p. 373.

3. *History of Jahangir*, p. 299.

4. *Tuzuk*, Rogers, II, p. 222.

On the death of Itmad-ud-daulah in the 16th year of his reign the Emperor appointed Abul Hasan as *diwan* or *wazir*[1]. During the following six years occurred most shocking events like the loss of Qandhar, rebellions of Shahjahan and Mahabat Khan. Though from the 4th year to the 21st year of his reign Jahangir did not appoint anyone to fill the post of *wakil*; but nowhe conferred this honour on Asaf Khan. What prompted him to do it, is difficult to say. Perhaps, he wanted that Asaf Khan during this critical period of his life should control the affairs of his dominions. Moreover, he was related both to the imperious Queen Nur Jahan and the ambitious Prince Shahjahan and was expected to maintain a balance between the two. He could also pull on well with the *diwan* and during the tenure of his office there occurred no conflict between the two. Thus, the post of *wakil* was revived with the object of pursuing the policy of 'checks and balances,' and also for furthering the interest of the empire through the joint efforts of the two highest officials of the State.

On his accession to the throne Shahjahan confirmed Asaf Khan and Abul Hasan in their respective posts[2]. But soon relations between the two became strained. Asaf Khan wanted to assert his unique position, he being the *wakil* as well as the father-in-law of the sovereign. Whereas the *diwan* by virtue of his powers as controller of purse strings of the empire paid scant regard to the *wakil* whom he deemed to be no more than an ornamental head. Indeed, the latter's constitutional position had become of secondary importance since the later part of Akbar's reign. The Emperor was called upon to resolve the tangle and he removed Abul Hasan from his post and appointed in his place Iradat Khan.

During the latter's tenure of office for about one and a hal year i.e. 1628-29 Asaf Khan made strenuous efforts to revitalise the position of *wakil* and make himself as *Wazir-e-Tafwiz* ; but the cautious policy of the Emperor did not allow him to gather

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1. *Tuzuk*, Rogers, II, p. 222; p. 228; *History of Jahangir*, p. 308.

2. *Badshah Namah*, I, pp. 113—15; *A History of Shahjahan of Dehli* by B. P. Saksena, pp. 64—65.

more power in his hands. No doubt the Emperor had all respects for his father-in-law and the *wakil*, but he never wanted to be domineered or overshadowed by him. In order to foil the *wakil's* plans he removed Asaf Khan's stooge Iradat Khan by sending him to the Deccan[1] and appointed in his place a comparatively more experienced man Allama Afzal Khan to the post of *wazir*.

Afzal Khan held the post for ten years till his death in the 12th year of the reign. As a trusted *diwan* and highly respected person he exercised considerable influence on the administration of the empire. He accompanied Shahjahan in all his tours and attended to administrative work[2]. According to Abdul Hamid Lahori, the author of *Badshah Namah*, all the important *firmans* particularly those which were addressed to the other rulers were drafted by the *wazir*. Further, his supreme status and ascendency over *wakil* is revealed by the fact that in the 10th regnal year when Shahjahan fell ill and was confined to bed, only Afzal Khan was admitted to the royal presence to apprise the Emperor of state of affairs and consult him on important issues[3]. Though Chandra Bhan Brahman remained in constant attendance upon Afzal Khan and owed his rise to him, he makes very little reference to the details of the *wazir's* work in the revenue department. He only says that he introduced certain regulations for administration of revenue and finance bearing in mind the well being of *raiyat*,[4] which may lead to increasing prayers for the sovereign's prosperity and bringing for himself a good name. Chandra Bhan quotes the remarks of Afzal Khan to elucidate the latter's conception of *wizarat*, "There are two types of *wazris*— one who listens to the king carefully, understands him and acts upon what is told to him; the others are those upon whose words the sovereign acts and whose considered opinion he ponders over. The *wazir* of this age can neither under-

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1 "Iradat Khan now given the title of Azam Khan', See, *A History of Shahjahan of Dehli*, p. 75.

2. *Badshah Namah*, I, pt. I, pp. 465—66, 478; I, pt. II, pp. 203, 209, 234, II, p. 117.

3. *Badshah Namah*, I, pt. II, p. 244.

4. *Raiyat* : Subjects.

stand correctly the directions of the king nor can act according to his will and pleasure. How then can we attain the other position?" Again, "A ruler needs a large capital. If there is not sufficient money in the treasury an army cannot be raised; if there be no sufficient army there can be no peace and orderly government in the country and where there is no peace there can be no revenues. The king's treasury becomes full when the country is well governed and prosperous and prosperity comes when the master of affairs i. e. the king understands all matters and attends to them personally". And possibly lamenting the *wazir's* own position he further remarks: "though an army can be raised with money, yet the establishment of peace in the country and the conquest of hearts of the people is never possible without a chief commander i.e. the *wazir*, who should be a man of wide outlook, courage and experience, endowed with considerable modesty and pleasant manners; but he should also enjoy implicit confidence of his sovereign and be vested with full powers of increasing and decreasing the ranks of the officers of the state, of giving awards and of retaining or dismissing them from service. He should have a large number of *tabinan* (personal troopers) so that he can call to account the highest *amirs* and nobles of the empire". The last statement of Afzal Khan clearly shows that wide powers were not given to *wakil* or to *wazir*. In fact, the Emperor reigned as well as ruled. Like his two immediate predecessors, Shahjahan wanted that both these officers should be subservient to him. Any departure from this tradition was fought with disastrous consequences.

In the 13th regnal year (1049 A. H./1639 A. D.) Islam Khan Mashhadi, the governor of Bengal, was appointed as *diwan* of the empire. He had started his career as clerk and by sheer dint of merit he rose to this high position. But with him was associated Diyanat Rai who held charge of *khalsa*. He was designated as 'acting *diwan*'. Orders were issued that all the affairs of *diwani* should be placed before the Emperor and that Diyanat Rai should deal with revenue matters in detail. This direction, in effect, implied curtailment of the powers of the *diwan*. And so from this time onward we find the *wazir* being gradually reduced to a position of

1. *Badshah Namah*, II, p. 164 ; Elliot & Dowson, VII, p, 67.

secondary importance. Finding it difficult to work under Islam Khan, who repeatedly claimed his inherent powers as the *diwan*, Diyanat Rai resigned and at his own request, he was appointed as *Diwan-e-Buyutat*.

Relieved of the undue influence of Diyanat Rai, Islam Khan now assumed full powers and exercised them in the fullest measure.[1] He combined in his person the ability of a *wazir*, the dignity of an *amir* and the learning of a scholar. He was rightly called *Sahib-e-saif wo qalam* (Master of pen and sword). He enjoyed the rank of 7000 and the title of *Umdat-ul-mulk*. In the 19th year of the reign he quitted his post and made room for Sadullah Khan.

It was in the 14th year of his reign when Shahjahan visited Lahore that scholarly talents of Sadullah Khan were brought to his notice by *Sadr-e-Sudur* Musvi Khan[2] and he was taken on the personal staff of the Emperor on daily allowance. Henceforward he continued to rise in the royal estimation till he attained this highest rank. Without going into the details of his career, suffice it to mention that he left his mark on every sphere of life. He toned the revenue administration, increased the prosperity of the *raiyat*, displayed his military talent in the Trans-Indus expedition. Indeed he was not only the best *wazir* of Shahjahan's time, but the best in the long line of Mughal *wazirs*. His sudden death in the 30th regnal year deprived the Emperor of a trusted officer at a very critical juncture. He would certainly have stood him in good stead and would have helped him in solving the most baffling problems of the day. Sadruddin bin Zabardast Khan, the author of *Irshad-ul-Wuzra*, assigns him the highest position among the four *wazirs* of the four great sovereigns.[3] Under him the institution of *wizarat* attained to its fullest dimensions. Sadullah Khan's death created a vaccum which for some time became difficult to fill. Rai Raghunath Rai, the *Diwan-e-Khalsa*, was given the officiating chance. Four months

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1. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 195.

2. Musvi Khan held the post of *Sadre-Sudur* or chief ecclesiastical officer for the first 15 years of Shahjahan's reign. (*A History of Shahjahan of Dehli* p. 275.)

3. Cf. *Central Structure of Mughal Empire*, p. 201.

later (July 1657) Muazzam Khan (Mir Jumlah) was appointed as *diwan*[1] but the same year he was sent to the Deccan. His son Mohammad Amin Khan continued to officiate for some time. And no sooner was the suspicion roused that Muazzam Khan had thrown his lot with Prince Aurangzeb than Mohammad Amin was removed from the post and Rai Raghunath Rai was ordered to sign all the papers. This arrangement continued till the 31st regnal year. The same year Jafar Khan was made *diwan*.[2] After sometime Jafar Khan was transferred to Malwa and Rai Raghunath was again asked to administer this department. He continued to hold this post till the end of Shahjahan's reign.

The foregoing account of the growth and development of the institution of *wizarat* under the Mughals brings out certain important aspects. During the reign of Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan, with a few exceptions, only meritorious persons with excellent record of service of long standing, of high status were appointed to this high office of *wizarat*. Persians were almost invariably given preference to others. Muzzaffar Khan, Shihabuddin Khan, Khwajah Mansur Shirazi, Wazir Khan, Qulij Khan, Mir Fathullah Shirazi, Khwajah Shamsuddin Khwafi, and Asaf Khan Qazwini of Akbar's reign; Itmad-ud-daulah of the reign of Jahangir; Iradat Khan, Afzal Khan Allami, Islam Khan, Sadullah Khan, Muazzam Khan and Jafar Khan of the reign of Shahjahan were all Persians. Thus it had been widely recognised in the pre-Aurangzeb period that the office should go only to a Persian. Whenever for an interim period such a person was not available, officiating chance was given to others. Another important feature which developed into a tradition in due course of time was that the *wazir* should not be allowed to become too powerful. Therefore, the incumbents of the high post were transferred from time to time to distant provinces and they were never allowed to remain in capital for long. Though this practice was not healthy, there was no other alternative. But because of frequency of trans-

1. M. U. Eng. Tr., II, p. 191 : Tavernier, I, p. 170 ; Manucci, I, 237 ; E. F. I., X, pp. 66 67.

2. M. U. Eng. Tr. II. p. 722.

fers, the *wazirs* could not pay due attention to agrarian problems, specially during the reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan.

Contemporary historians have in general terms referred to the prosperity of the *raiyat* in the context of the duties of *wazir ;* but with the introduction of *ijara*[1] system during the later part of the reign of Shahjahan exploitation by local *zamindars* must have occurred on the large scale. The *wazir* could do little to alleviate the sufferings of the producing classes. Moreover, not infrequently the energies of capable *wazir* was diverted into wrong channels. During the latter part of the reign of Shahjahan we find that Sadullah Khan was deputed to the Balkh expedition and two sieges of Qandhar. He was also sent to the Mewar front. Had he been allowed to remain at the centre, perhaps, he would have successfully controlled the court politics and checked the high handed behaviour of the local *zamindars* towards the *raiyat*. The aftermath of the policy of keeping the *wazirs* away from their legitimate duty became more apparent during the reign of Aurangzeb.

The inner working of the institution of *wizarat* indicates that there was less tension amongst the nobles during the reign of Jahangir and Shahjahan as compared to the earlier period, which could be described as the age of transition and experimentation. Once the revenue and finance had been separated from administration and the work of the department was split into more than two branches, it became difficult for one person to play a vital role and overshadow others. Thus the *wazir* had a very high political status but correspondingly enjoyed much less effective powers. This was but natural, because the rulers were loth to share their glory with any other individual, however efficient he might be. In fact Akbar like Sher Shah arrogated to himself all credit for administrative reforms.

Moreover, in the light of known facts, it is difficult to assert with any degree of certainty if at any time during the Turkish period

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1. *Ijara* : "It constituted a sort of contract & implied the farming out of the revenues of a *mahal* or more than one *mahal* & the ijaradar was required to pay the fixed amount as stipulated in the agreement without any reference to increase or decrease in the collection". [For details See, *Land Revenue Administration unde the Mughals, P.* 92.]

there was any officer like Chief Minister or Prime Minister as we envisage him in modern times. At the least we can say that a ruler appointed or selected from among high ranking nobles any one to repose his confidence in him. Such an officer was not uniformly designated as *wazir*. He may be a '*naib sultan*', '*naib mumalik*, '*diwan*, or otherwise recipient of any other suitable title like '*wakil*', '*jumdat-ul-mulk*', '*yamin-ud-daulat*' etc. In fact, there was no correspondence between a title and the powers which its incumbent was expected or required to discharge. Even so the role of the *wazirs* of Aurangzeb is interesting from the political and administrative points of view.

By the time Aurangzeb ascended the throne the experimental period of the institution of *wizarat* had come to an end. The office of *wazir* had then emerged as a full fledged institution. The head of this office was described as *wazir*, *wazir-e-azam*, *wazir-e-muazzam* or the *diwan-e-ala*.[1] The *wazir* in the reign of Aurangzeb as we shall see in the following pages enjoyed a high position in administrative hierarchy. He touched all the departments at the central and provincial level. In other words, his authority extended over a wide range. He used to reccommend the names for promotions and appointments to the high offices of the empire. He was also responsible for the supervision and control of various assignments and the grant of *madadmaash land*.[2] He was the chief executive of revenue and finance.[3] For this reason in the official documents he is generally described as *madar-ul-mahamai* and *jumdat-ul-mulki*. He also looked after religious and secular affairs and, was responsible for executing royal orders and enforcing imperial regulations.[4] With

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1. M. L., II, p. 235 ; A. N., pp. 832-37 ; *Farhang-e-Kardani* by Jagat Rai Shujai, f. 27b ; *Land Revenue Administration under the Mughals* p. 61.

2. *Madadmaash land* : It was a grant of land made in recognition of the need, piety, learning or family (especially Shaikh or Saiyed) of the recipient.

3. *Farhag e-Kardani*, f. 27b.

4. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, f. 15a.

the help of his subordinate staff he was excepted to protect the *raiyat* from the exploitation by the other semi-governmental agencies such as *zamindars* and *jagirdars*. Besides, he used to receive foreign ambassadors and present them before the Emperor in the audience hall. He was also required to be in touch with the affairs of the local states and the neighbouring countries.[1]

It is related that all the officers civil or military used to be under him. In this manner the *wazir* had to perform the multifarius functions. As the head of the finance department all revenue papers were properly scrutinized and signed by him. All the appointments in the revenue department were made by him. He used to look after the general administration, listen to the complains of the people and dispose of the petitions submitted by the mansabdar[2] and other officers. Outside his office he was required to lead campaign against the refractory chiefs and to be with the Emperor during the course of a campaign.

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1. *Hidayet-ul-Qawaid*, ff. 7b—9b ; *Khulasat-us-Siyaq* ff. 15a-b ; *Land Revenu Administration under the Mughals*, p. 61.

2. *Mansabdar* : The holder of a *mansab* or a rank in the imperial service denoting his obligation to maintain a fixed number of horsemen.

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Muazzam Khan

Mir Mohammad Saeed, later known as Muazzam Khan was born in Ardistan about 1591. His father Syed Mirza Hazaru was a poor oil merchant of Isfhan, the old capital of Iran.[1] Due to the pecuniary difficulties of his parents, he joined school for a very short period ; and later, circumstances compelled him to secure a job under a diamond merchant. As a sales representative of his master he came into contact with some of the merchants of Golkunda[2], one of the richest and prosperous kingdom of the Deccan.

When he reached the age of the discretion he found himself surrounded with economic hardship and the oppression of the Persian *Shaikh-ul-Islam*. In search of his bread and better prospects, he, like many other Shiahs, migrated from Persia to the kingdom of Golkunda. The exact date of Mir's arrival in Golkunda is not known; but most probably he came in 1625, sometime before the accession of Abdullah Qutb Shah.[3] On the basis of his previous

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1. M.U , Eng. Tr.; II, p. 188 ; *Life of Mir Jumla* by Jugdish Narayan Sarkar p. 1 ; Sherwani H. K. "*Reign of 'Abdul-lah Qutub Shah*", J.I.H., vol. XLV, Part I, April 1967 ; Tavernier, I, p. 165 ; *Prince Aurangzeb* by S. Moinul Haq, p. 58.

2. Manucci, I, p. 231-32 ; Berneir, p 16 ; M. U., Eng. Tr. II, p. 188; Dow, III, p. 182 ; *History of the Deccan* by Gribble, I, pp. 269 70 ; Thevenot, p. 102.

3. Tavernier informs us that Mir Mohammad Saeed helped 'Abdullah Qutb Shah in his accession (1626 A.D.). From this it is evident that the former arrived before this date. Tavernier, I, p. 165. But according to Gribble, he arrived at Golkunda about the year 1630 A.D. which is hardly acceptable, *History of the Deccan*, I. p. 270).

experience he was appointed as an apprentice to a diamond merchant. But, soon he left this service and started his own business of diamonds. Within no time, by his shrewdness and sagacity, he accumulated immense wealth and owned a number of ships. His extensive trade with the countries far and near raised him to the status of "a great merchant of much fame in the kingdom".[1] Being ambitious he began to look for prospects at the court of Abdullah Qutb Shah.[2]

Being a well known trader and man of wisdom and generosity, he gained for himself a large number of friends at the royal court. They promoted his interests at the king's audiences.[3] Anxious to raise his status, Mir presented to Abdullah Qutb Shah some fine elephants and a number of pieces of cloths of Europe and China make.[4] His initiative, his innate energy, his spirit of adventure, his organising capacity attracted the attention of Abdullah Qutb Shah, who appointed him to the post of *sardaftardar* or the keeper of the royal records, which he held upto 1635-36[5] In the meantime, his remarkable talents gained him patronage of Mir Jumlah Allami Fahmi Shaikh Mohammad, the *Peshwa*, the highest office in the administrative machinery of the kingdom of Golkunda. Abdullah Qutb Shah fully conscious of his own limitations, made the least interferences in the work of his ministers.[6] So, it was but natural for the highest minister like *Peshwa* to gather more authority and exercise unlimited powers.

Mir Mohammad Saeed ingratiated himself into the favours of the *Peshwa*, who elevated him to the post of *havaladar* of Masuli-

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1. Manucci I, p. 232; Bernier, p. 16. Thevenot, p. 98 ; *History of the Deccan*, I, p. 270.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Manucci, I, p. 232 ; Dow, III, p. 182.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Hadiqa*, p 167 ; Sherwani, H. K., "*Administration, International Conduct and Social Conditions under Abdullah Qutb Shah* (1626-72)". J H. vol. XLIV, part I, April, 1966 ; p. 7

6. *Ibid.*

patam[1] which was an important centre of trade and commerce. It had extensive intercourse with the countries of Far East, Middle East and Europe; but its administration of having not been properly looked after, corruption prevailed there. The officers had become selfish and greedy; they cared little for the economic interests of the kingdom. It was in this atmosphere that the *havaldar* was expected to give proof of his administrative talents. He gave a good account of himself, soon gained control of the situation, rooted out the prevailing evils and set the affairs in their proper gear. Thus he fully justified the confidence reposed in him and four months later the *havaldari* of Kondapalli-Mustafanagar[2] was added to his charge (1637). He very skillfully managed its administration and was able to develop its resources. His reforms were applauded by the officers and praised by the Sultan.

From the post of '*havaldar*' he was promoted to the post of '*sarkhail*'. The term '*sarkhail*' literally means 'leader of a group' ; but in practice it meant chief revenue officer at the capital with extensive jurisdiction over the districts and provinces.[3] Besides, like Mir Jumlah, he had to discharge civil and military duties also. It was a very important post and to a large extent to the welfare of the kingdom depended on the ability and skill of its incumbent. Mir was summoned to the Court where he arrived on the 21st June, 1637. He brought some fine elephants and pieces of European and China cloth.[4] Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah, received him with open arms and appointed him '*sarkhail*' in succession to Syed Abdullah Mazendrari.

As *sarkhail* Mir discharged his duties with great discretion and prudence ; and within a short span of time he obtained the foremost place in the administration of the kingdom.[5] When

1 *Hadiqa*, p. 167 ; Sherwani, H. K., "*Administration, International Conduct and Social Conditions under Abdullah Qutb Shah* (1626-72)". JIH, vol, XLIV, part I, April, 1966; p. 7 ; *Life of Mir Jumla*, p. 3.

2. *Ibid*; *Hadiqa* p. 190.

3. Sherwani, H.K., "*Administration, International Conduct and Social Conditions under Abdullah Qutb Shah* (1626-72) JIH, vol. XLIV, part I, April 1966, p. 7.

4. Manucci, I. p. 232:

5 *Ibid*, *Hadiqa*, p. 190.

he assumed his new charge, the administration was full of corruption and depravity. Nizamuddin Ahmad, the author of *Hadiqat-us-Salatin* writes, "He removed all the sources of oppression and illicit profit on the part of the revenue collectors. He realised a huge sum of money from the subordinates and the Brahmans, and deposited it in the royal treasury". His quick despatch of business and his methodical approach to the problems deeply impressed the Sultan who presented him a jewelled pen-case and granted him a *parganah*[1] having income of 30,000 *huns*[2] for his maintenance.[3]

Mir Mohammad Saeed now became a favourite of the Sultan's mother Hayat Bakhshi Begum[4] and according to her wishes he built a four-storied palace *Hayat Mahal*, after her name. This palace was constructed under the personal supervision of Mir, who employed master artisans and craftsmen of that time. Working incessantly day and night, they successfully completed (in 1638) the building in a short period of a year. Inside the 'palace' there was provision of a summer apartment together with a '*Ghuslkhanah*' and the top storey was crowned with lofty minarets. The building was decorated by expert designers and the painters of India and Iran, who very beautifully depicted the court life, hunting and war scenes. The architecture of '*Hayat Mahal*' is a fine piece of Indo-Iranian or in other words Hindu-Muslim Style. Nizamuddin Ahmad the author of *Hadiqat-us-Salatin* compares it with the 'Eden'.[5]

When the Sultan visited the palace, Mir Mohammad Saeed displayed his tact by according to him a magnificient reception. It was beautifully decorated throughout. From its entrance to the main building of the palace altogether eight lofty gateways were erected and valvet carpets and gold brocade were spread over the entire approach. A number of men were posted in front of the palace holding in their hands beautiful trays of gold full of jewels

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1. Parganah : *A number of villages formed a Parganah.*
2. Huns: *Plural of 'hun', a deccan coin.*
3. *Hadiqa*, p. 191.
4. Bernier, p. 18.
5. *Hadiqa*, PP. 216.

and cloths which added grandeur to the show The *sarnaubats* were asked to play in honour of the royal visit. A *'langarkhanah'* (free kitchen) was also set up to distribute charity. On the arrival of the Sultan, Mir presented him number of gold utensils, a gold beadstead, fine pieces of cloth and many other costly articles. In recognition of these services Mir was honoured with special presents by the Queen-mother.[1]

Mir's talents and his growing intimacy with the Sultan roused the jealousy of the *dabir* or *munshi-ul-mumalik*,[2] Mulla Uwais who began to interfere with the affairs of the *sarkhail* and even of the *peshwa*. This proved intolerable to Mir, who was now favourite of the Sultan. In his resentment he pressed the allegation of disloyalty against him.[3] In the end, Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah dismissed the *dabir* (July 1638) and asked Mir to deal with the retainers of Mulla-Uwais. On the 20th February 1639, Mirza Taqi Nishapuri was appointed as the *dabir* in place of Mulla Uwais, and Mirza Rustam, who was summoned from Qasimkota, was given the *wizarat*. Soon after, Mir Mohommad Saeed was granted a *khilat khasa*'[4] and his high post of *sarkhail* was combined with the dignified office of *wizarat*.[5]

When the Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah visited the seacoast, in October-December 1639, he was much impressed with the work of Mir Mohammad Saeed who made befiitting arrangements for the Sultan's tour.[6] He sent out directions to the officers on the highways asking them to be vigilant and to keep food ready. The retinue of the Sultan included the ambassadors of Iran, Delhi and other

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1. *Hadiqa*, pp. 218-19.

2. *Dabir or Munshi-ul-Mumalik*, (Chief Secretary) : His office was called 'Diwan-e-Insha', and one of the main duties of this officer was noting on the petitions & drafting the *firmans*. He had some judicial work to perform as well.

3. *Hadiqa*, p. 221.

4. *Khilat khasa*: Special robe of honous.

5. *Hadiqa*, P. 227 : he got this promotion before 19th July, 1639-Love, I, P. 14

6. For this journey, see *Hadiqa*, pp. 230-38.

countries. Particular mention should be made of Imam Quli Beg, the *hajib* of Iran who had already left the capital, but was summoned to accompany the Sultan to Masulipatam.

Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah arrived at Hayatnagar on 1st, November 1639, amid scenes of pomp and splendour. From Hayatnagar, in company of Mir he proceeded to the hill fort of Anantgiri and then to Kondapalli-Mustafanagar. He reached Kondapalli-Mustafanagar on 19th, November 1639. At Mustafanagar, he appreciated Mir's services, who had posted his trustworthy officers round the fort to guard against the attacks of carnivorous animals.

Resuming his journey, the Sultan reached Bezwada on 23rd November when he was met by the captains of the English, Dutch and Danish companies who had come from Masulipatam. From Bezwada, the Sultan went to Weyur and from there to Masulipatam. On his arrival at Masulipatam the Sultan found every house and shop of the traders beautifully decorated with fine cloths and other articles. Mounted on elephant the Sultan had a view of the environs of the port. He then marched towards bankshell with Mir by his side. On the way to bankshell Mir answered to all the querries made by the Sultan. In the bankshell building a *majlis*[1] was held in honour of the Sultan.

During Sultan's stay at Muslipatam Mir Mohammad Saeed acquainted him with the condition of the port and its people. Then both of them visited the companies of the different countries, met their representatives and showed them great favours by remitting the *zakat*[2], which was payable on every article at the port entrance, by the merchants and on the brokerage realised from traders in jewellery. On this occasion many Syeds and other deserving inhabitants of the port received grants in cash and kind.

Mir Mohammad Saeed's administrative capacity and bubbling energy made a deep impression on Abdullah Qutb Shah, who on the

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1. *Majlis* : An assembly or a meeting.

2. *Za at* : A prescribed Muslim charity of $2\frac{1}{2}$ percent on income, including income possible from unused capital.

day of departure (on 7th December 1639) from the port, honoured him with many costly presents consisting of a *chadar* which he was having on his shoulders and a dress of honour befitting the respectable post of *sarkhail*.[1] On Mir's recommendation a number of European captains, who had waited upon the Sultan during his stay were duly honoured.

Thus, step by step Mir Mohammad Saeed rose to eminence till he was promoted to the post of *Mir Jumlah*. It is difficult to give the exact date on which he was appointed to this post but it is certain that he was the immediate successor of Shaikh Mohammad. His elevation threw into shade the formal incumbents. Now onwards the epithet *Mir Jumlah* became synonymous with Mir Mohammad Saeed.[2] There were few in the kingdom who equalled him in authority.[3] Nothing could be done without his knowledge and consent. He became the golden link between the Sultan and the Europeans. It was imperative for a merchant to see Mir Jumlah first and to obtain his approval before waiting upon the Sultan, because any paper that he had not seen or which had not been approved by him, was not laid before Qutb Shah. Even the latter bought nothing and received no presents, except on the advice of his Prime Minister. It is related that when Tavernier wanted to sell some 'pear-shaped pearls' and other jewels to the Sultan at Golkunda, he had to go from Masulipatam to Mir at Gandikota to obtain his approvel.[4] Thus, Mir Jumlah because of his widespread commercial contact and his free hand in administration, became the most influential man in the kingdom. According to the English factory records December 1639 "he governeth the whole kingdom". Later on he governed "the king and consequently the country".[5]

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1. *Hadiqa*, p. 264.

2. Sherwani, H. K., "*Administration, International Conduct and Social Conditions under Abdullah Qutb Shah*, (1626-72)", JIH, vol. XLIV, part I, April 1966, p. 7.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Tavernier, I, p. 259.

5. E.F.I., VII, pp. 88, 207—28.

The Karnatak upland which extended to 300 miles in length and 40-60 miles in breadth, yielded a revenue of 40 lacs of rupees a year.[1] It possessed several diamond mines and very strong fortresses like Kanchikot and Siddhout.[2] Waris, the author of *Padshah Namah* says that "No Nayak of the Qutb-ul-Mulk could capture even a tiny fort of that region, but Mir Jumlah conquered it along with a few big fortresses".[3] At this time civil war was raging there. The Rayal and the Nayaks of Tanjore, Madura and Jinji were at daggers drawn with each other. The Nayaks defeated the Rayal's forces in December 1645, and so the latter sent 4000 soldiers to blockade the Pulicat fort.[4] In the meantime the Rayal received a severe blow at the hands of Khan-e-Khana Muzaffaruddin, who was achieving victory after victory in the Karnatak Balaghat and had captured Nandiyal and eight other strong forts in the beginning of 1646.

It was in the midst of this crisis that Mir Jumlah made his appearance on the Karnatak scene. His efficient and disciplined army consisted of a number of European gunners and cannon founders. He opened his campaign from the north-east, and by the middle of February 1646, captured three strongholds. Then by his diplomacy he won over to his side, the treacherous Mallaiya who betrayed his master by surrendering the famous fortress of Udayagiri without offering any resistance. After this Mir Jumlah captured the fortress of Siddhout, east of Cuddapah district.[5]

Mir Jumlah's crowning feat in the Karnatak was the capture of the rock fortress of Gandikota, hitherto deemed impregnable. Tavernier writes : "Gandikot is one of the fortified towns which are in the kingdom of Carnatak. It is built on the summit of a high mountain, and the sole means of access of it is by a very difficult road, which is only 20 or 25 feet wide, and its certain parts

1. M. U., Eng. Tr. II, p. 188.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Padshah Namah* by Waris, 102 a; E.F.I., VII, pp. 193—94.
4. E.F.I., VIII, p. 24-26; Love, I, p. 73.
5. *Ibid.*, Bernier, p. 17 n.

only 7 or 8 ;..... on the right of the road, which is cut in the mountain, there is fearful precipice, at the base of which runs a long river".[1] On the top of the mountain there stretched a small plain which was sown with rice and millet, and was watered by many small springs. "At the level of the plain to the south, where the town is built on a point, the limits are formed by pre i-pices, with two rivers which bound the point at the base.....there is but one gate on the plain side, and it is fortified in this direction with three good walls of cut stone, with the ditches at their bases faced with the same stone".[2] So, at the time of the siege the defen-ders had only to guard a 'space of 400 or 500 paces wide'. They had only two guns—one being a 12 pounder placed on the gate and the other being a 7 to 8 pounder placed on the point of a kind of bastion.[3] Raja Timma Nayar was considered to be one of the best and bravest generals among the Hindus. But the Raja was no match to the strategy of Mir Jumlah, who by diplomacy won over to his side the French gunners by promising to each of them four month's wages more than their ordinary pay.[4] He also took in his employ a number of English and Dutch gunners and two or three Italians.[5] Thus, four guns were mounted, with which they bombar-ded the fort and when half of the gate of the town had been battered down, the gunners capitulated ; evacuating the fort under the honourable conditions. For the successful campaign against Gandikota, Mir was honoured with '*Nauroz Khilat*'[6] by Abdullah Qutb Shah.

The reduction of Gandikota was quickly followed by that of Chandragiri and Tirupati. On the 26th August 1652, Tavernier

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1. E.F.I., VIII, pp. 24—26; Love, I, 73; *A History of Ginjee and its Rulers*, by C. S. Srinivasachari, p. 164.

2. Tavernier, I, p. 184.

3. *Ibid.*

4. According to Tavernier, these French gunners gave up Dutch service on account of the treatment which they had received.

5. Tavernier, I, p. 284-85; Bernier, p. 17n; Thevenot, p. 102; E.F.I., IX, pp. 22-23.

6 *Nauroz khilat* : A robe of honour given on New year's day.

observed "several companies of military passing, some with handpikes, others with guns, and other with sticks, who were going to join one of the principal captains of the Mir Jumlah's army, on a hill near Courua, where he had pitched his tents.....We set out in order to go to salute him, and we found him in his tent with many nobles who were chiefs of the country, all being idolaters".[1] It is evident that the Hindu chiefs of this region had acknowledged his sway ; and they presented themselves before the Mir to tender their submission.

Thus, Mir Jumlah with his ceaseless activity and determined efforts annexed a large tract to his master's kingdom. Manucci writes : "during the time of his government in the Karnatak, Mir Jumlah gathered together the great treasures which then existed in the ancient temples of the Hindu idol".[2] Bernier confirms this statement and says that Mir Jumlah 'seized upon all precious stones with which the statues were ornamented'. He compelled the inhabitants of the Karnatak to surrender to him all the gold and jewels which they possessed. Besides, the diamond mines considerably added to his wealth, and he became recognised as one of the 'richest private man in the South'.

Mir Jumlah's wealth and his growing power in the Karnatak naturally roused the cupidity of Abdullah Qutb Shah. The envious Deccani nobles at court pointed out to the Sultan the danger lurking to his own security. His riches were represented to overshadow the grandeur of the Sultan himself.[3] The Sultan was persuaded to regard the other no better than any other employee. He thus claimed a lion's share in his *wazir's* conquests, because the success in the Karnatak had been achieved with the resources of the state. On the other hand Mir Jumlah was fully aware of the weakness and worth-

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1. Tavernier, I. 273.

2. Manucci, I, p. 232; Bernier, p. 17.

3. Bernier, 17-18; Tavernier, I, pp. 165-66; Manucci, I, 232-33; M. U. Eng. Tr., II, p. 188; A. S., III, p. 213; *Shahjahan Namah* , Elliot & Dowson, VII, 108; *History of the Deccan*, I, p 273; Sherwani, H. K., "*Reign of Abdullah Qutb Shah* (1626-1672) *Political and Military Aspects*" J.I.H., XLV, Pt. I, April, 1967, p. 128.

lessness of his master. He considered the conquest to be the handiwork of his own and he wanted to establish an independent kingdom there. Tavernier remarks : "They (courtiers) told that the power of Mir Jumlah should cause him to be suspected ; that all his actions tended towards dethrowing him and securing the kingdom of Golkunda for his son ; that he ought not to wait till the evil was without remedy; and that in order to rid himself of an enemy—the more dangerous because he concealed himself—the shortest way was to poison him".[1] Being thus pressed and persuaded, the Sultan began to harbour evil designs against his *wazir*.[2]

When the report of rift between the Sultan and Mir Jumlah was communicated to Prince Aurangzeb by the Mughal agent at Golkunda, he wrote to the latter that "he (Mughal agent) should try to guide him (Mir Jumlah) to the noble court"[3] (Mughal Court), as he had often expressed his devotion to the Emperor. Meantime, Abdullah Qutb Shah, in pursuance of the pre-concerted plan summoned Mir Jumlah to court in order to seize and blind him. But Mir Jumlah's son Amin Khan who was at the court got an inkling of the plot and he warned his father of the impending danger. Upon this Mir Jumlah who had actually started for the court, returned to Karnatak.[4] He directed Amin Khan that he should also leave the court under any plausible pretext. But it proved difficult for the latter (Amin Khan) to elude the vigilance with which he was guarded.[5]

With his inborn discretion and far-sightedness Mir Jumlah looked around for protection against his master who had now turned 'as the greatest of his enemies'. Counting upon his previous attachment to the Persian court he addressed a petition to Shah Abbas II informing him that he was keen to return to his motherland with all of his hoarded treasure because his stay in the

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1. Tavernier, I, 165.
2. *Ibid.*, Bernier, p. 16; Manucci, I, pp. 232-33.
3. Adab, 39a.
4. Bernier, p. 18; Manucci, I, p. 233.
5. *Ibid.*

Karnatak had become difficult. In his reply, the Shah, while appreciating his past services and promising his help 'at the right moment' advised him to establish friendly relations with his master[1] because both of them professed the same faith. But Mir Jumlah was not satisfied with this half hearted assurance and he began to cast his eye on other sides. He approached the Adil Shah and promised to hold the Karnatak on his behalf. He presented to him some costly lockets richly set with diamonds and gems.[2] To better his position in the Karnatak, he began to cultivate cordial relations with the Raja of Chandragiri by holding out to him the assurance of safety. But the Adil Shah had little faith in the Mir's integrity; he regarded his presents no more than tricks of diplomacy. On the top of it all, he began to intrigue with the ruler of Golkunda which threatened Mir Jumlah's safety. In these circumstances, Mir Jumlah began to widen the net of his diplomacy. To counteract the latent hostility of the Adil Shah, he began to court friendship of Ikhlas Khan Habashi, the governor of the Bijapuri Karnatak who, probably, very much like him wanted to establish an independent kingdom in that region. Besides Ikhlas Khan, he also endeavoured to win over Shahji Bhonsla.[3]

In addition to overtures in other directions, Mir Jumlah continued his secret correspondence with Abdullah's deadly enemy Prince Aurangzeb, who was an excellent judge of men and was equally keen to secure the services of such an able supporter to make him a fit instrument for the prosecution of his ambitions[4] in the Deccan. Hence, the Mughal Prince pursuaded his father to offer all assistance to Mir Jumlah against his wrathful master. He com-

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1. *Adab*, 30 a; Tavernier; I, p. 166; Sherwani, H. K., "*Reign of Abdullah Qutb* (1626-1672) *Political and Military Aspects*" XLV, part, April, 1967, pp. 128 29.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Life of Mir Jumla*, p. 72.

4. About the strength of Mir Jumlah's forces, Aurangzeb wrote, he had 9000 horsemen, 5000 servants and 4000 of the Sultan's men, in addition to 20 000 infantry, (*Ruqqat*, No 2: 88).

mended his qualities to Shahjahan, saying that he was fit to become the *wazir* of the empire. In reply the Emperor directed the prince to send the Mir to court and to do whatever was in his and his family's interest.[1] It is curious that the Emperor did not specify what favours he would grant to the Mir and his son. The Mir dallied with the offers and waited to see what turn his fortunes would take.

The Emperor directed his agent Mohammad Momin who was near the Karnatak to assure Mir Jumlah of royal favours and assistance. Instructions were also issued to Aurangzeb to spare no effort to persuade the Mir to enter the imperial service. When Mohammad Momin arrived in the Karnatak, he found that Mir Jumlah was anxious to know precisely the terms and conditions of his new employment and the honour which would be shown to him in the Mughal court. In fact, he addressed a secret representation to the Emperor made to have a clear picture of his future prospects. But the delay in the Emperor's response made the Mir suspicious of the royal intentions, though Aurangzeb constantly assured him of the greatest favours and protection, if he came to the court.[2] But the Mir, being a man of patience and not haste begged of Aurangzeb to grant him respite for a year or two or enable him to collect his goods scattered in the various parts and to keep up appearances towards Abdullah Qutb Shah. He further stressed that he was very much anxious that strict secrecy should be maintained, otherwise the harm done to him would be beyond repair.

When Mohammad Momin, the Mughal agent came to Aurangzeb from Golkunda, he reported the whole affair relating to Mir Jumlah. The prince wrote to the Emperor that "Mir Jumlah outwardly professes that he has no shelter except the Imperial court and that he, after collecting his wealth, would start for it; but his actions and demeanour show that he is not sincere in his pretensions. As he has got hold of a large kingdom containing

1. *Adab*, 48b
2. *Adab*, 48b

a number of fortresses, ports and mines, he cannot reconcile himself with his old master. He has scorned the offer of the Sultan of Bijapur to enter his service. His professed submission to the Imperial court is just a trick to stave off as open rupture with the two Sultans. He will not leave that country (the Karnatak) for any other place..... He has won over the *Zamindars* of the Karnatak with courtesy and munificence; he is making friend with Ikhlas Khan Habashi.....Mir Jumlah is passing his time with much care and caution".[1]

But somehow Abdullah Qutb Shah got an inkling of secret correspondence which was going between Mir Jumlah and the Mughal court, and so he ordered that strict watch be kept upon his son Amin Khan who was then at Golkunda. When Mir Jumlah found that his family in Golkunda was in grave danger, he wrote to Aurangzeb, "I am Shahjahan's servant and beg to be saved by him". Aurangzeb at once sent a report to the Emperor and tried to persuade him not to miss the opportunity by stating that "Golkunda together with what Mir Jumlah had occupied in the Karnat k..... together with the choicest, and rare things in abundance... would fall into the hands of the Emperor."

On receipt of Mir Jumlah's appeal and Aurangzeb's recommendation, Shahjahan sent to him a gracious *firman* appointing him to the rank of 5000 *zat*/5000 *sawar* and his son Mohammad Amin to that of 2000 *zat*/1000 *sawar*[2] He also sent through Qazi Mohammad Arif of Kashmir an order to Abdullah Qutb Shah asking him not to interefere with Mir Jumlah and his family.[3] As soon as Abdullah Qutb Shah received this information he threw into prison Mohammad Amin and his dependentson 21st November 1655 and confiscated all his movable and immovable properties.[4]

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1. *Adab*, 39a.

2. M. U., Eng. Tr. II, p. 189 ; *Amal e-Saleh*, III, p 213 ; Tavernier, I, p. 166 ; *Shahjahan Namah* Elliot and Dowson vol. VII, p. 108. Prof. Jagdish Narayan Sarkar wrongly states that Muhammad Amin was given the rank of 2000 2000. See *Life of Mir Jumla*, p. 74.

3. A. S., III, p 213 ; M. U. Eng. Tr. II p. 189 ; Tavernier, I p. 166 ; *Shahjahan Namah*, Elliot & Dowson, VII, p. 108 ; *Adab*, 45a.

4. *Ibid*

The arrest of Muazzam Khan's family was against the fourth article of the '*Inqiyad Namah*[1] (or Deeds of Submission) concluded in between the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan and Abdullah Qutb Shah, the ruler of Golkunda, on 23rd May 1636. According to this Abdullah Qutb Shah had promised to consider His Majesty's friends as his friends and His Majesty's enemies as his enemies.[2]

This incident of Mohammad Amin's arrest has been inaccurately interpreted by Jadunath Sarkar and others. They say that the Sultan arrested him for his insolvent behaviour. Jadunath Sarkar writes, "One day Mohammad Amin came to court reeling with drunkenness, fell asleep on the king's own carpet, and soiled it in crop sickness. The long suffering king could not bear this crowning act of insult. His anger boiled over, and he threw Mohammad Amin and his family into prison and attached their property".[3] But a question arises that it was Mohammad Amin who had misbehaved, then why was the entire family of Mir Jumlah thrown into prison ? Mohammad Amin alone should have been punished. This shows that at the time of the arrest of the entire family of Mir Jumlah, only Amin's conduct was not in question. Shah Nawaz Khan, the author of *Masir-ul-Umara* writes that, "A number of his enemies under cover of loyalty but with a view to creating trouble, made untrue reports to Qutb Khan, and arroused his suspicions. Mir Jumlah's son Mir Mohammad Amin, who was at the court, suffered from the dual intoxication of youth and prosperity, and being puffed up by the brilliant victories of his father behaved presumptuously and exceeded all bounds. For example, he came drunk one day to the *darbar*, and went to sleep on the royal *masnad*,[4] and added to his offence by vomitting there (*istifragh namudah*). As a result the the signs of annoyance become apparent. Mir Jumlah had high expectations of favour on account or his victories, but when he found the results to the contrary making their appear-

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1. For details see *Badshah Namah* II, pp. 177-81 ; Sherwani, H. K. *The Reign of Abdullah Qutb Shah* (1626-1672) *Political & Military Aspects*, J. I. H., Vol. XLV, Pt. 1, April 1967, pp. 121-22.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *History of Aurangzeb*, I, p. 269.
4. *Masnad* : 'A Cushion or Carpet raised above the floor'.

ance, he became disheartened and in the 19th regnal year (Shahjahani) sought an alliance with Prince Mohammad Aurangzeb, who was the viceroy of the Deccan and begged that he might be sent for".[1] The author further adds that "On the request of the Prince, the Emperor sent a letter announcing the grant of a *mansab* of five thousand *zat* and *sawar* (to Mir Jumlah) and of two thousand *zat* and one thousand *sawar* (to his son Mohammad Amin, and dispatched an order to Qutb Shah through Qazi Mohammad Arif Kashmiri not to interfere with the two men and their relations. On hearing this news Qutb Shah imprisoned Mohammad Amin with his family and forfeited all his belongings".[2] This statement is confirmed by contemporary European travellers. Manucci writes that, "the king of Golkunda finding that Mir Jumlah did not mean to obey the repeated orders issued for his return to court, directed the arrest of Mohammad Amin Khan".

Thus, the arrest of Amin Khan and his family was made not because of his misconduct, but it was directly connected with his father's machinations. Even after Mir Jumlah's retirement to the Karnatak, Abdullah had not adopted stern attitude towards him and he continued to write to him letters asking him to return to capital. So long as there was a ray hope of Mir's return, he avoided to take any drastic step against Amin Khan. But when he found that his *wazir* who was fully conversant with the ins and outs of his kingdom had decided to go over to the Mughals,[3] the Sultan left with no other alternative. But the anxiety of Qutb Shah did not end here. He was apprehensive of alliance between his treacherous *wazir* and his mortal foe Aurangzeb, the two together would prove a veritable danger to the security of his kingdom. This view is also confirmed by Sudhari Lal, the author of *Tuhfa-e-Shahjahani*' who writes, "On hearing of Mir Jumlah's *mansab* (given by Shahjahan), Qutbul Mulk due to his jealousy and enmity arrested his son Mir Mohammad Amin".[4]

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1. M. U., Eng. Tr , II, pp. 188-89.
2. M. U., III, pp. 531-32.
3. A. S. III, p. 213.
4. It is also corroborated by Mohammad Saleh Kam' u, See ; A. S., III, p. 221.

The Emperor, on hearing the news of the arrest of Mir Jumlah's son and his family, wrote to Aurangzeb (24th December, 1655) that "an order should be sent to Abdullah Qutb Shah that the imprisonment of his son was disrespectful, particularly after his entry into the Imperial service and he must either release his son or be prepared for war". The Emperor also sent orders to Shaysta Khan. Iftikhar Khan, Prithvi Raj and others to present themselves before Prince Aurangzeb.[1] On receipt of this command Auarangzeb sent Hadidad Khan to Golkunda and instructed him to wait there. He also sent Mir Abdul Qasim and Syed Ali with a *nishan* to Abdullah Qutb Shah (20th December) stressing the disrespect shown by the latter in arresting Mohammad Amin and asking him to release him and his family, restore their confiscated properties, and to send them to the Imperial court along with the bearers of *nishan*.[2] The Sultan was also warned that if he delayed or disobeyed the orders, then Prince Auarangzeb would send his son against him.[3]

But Abdullah Qutb Shah paid no heed to Aurangzeb's repeated warnings and also to Shahjahan's previous letter dated the 3rd December, 1655, sent through Qazi Arif Kashmiri. So Aurangzeb anticipating the Emperor's sanction, directed his son Mohammad Sultan on 26th December to march to Nander and wait there till further orders.[4] He then wrote to Shahjahan, "As previously related, I had sent a letter to Qutb-ul-Mulk before the arrival of your Majesty's order. As I learn from my agent at Golkunda that Qutb-ul-Mulk is not willing to release Mir Jumlah's son, for the sake of final discussion I sent Abdul Qasim to Qutb-ul-Mulk. On the 8th of the current month (*Rubiul Awwal* 1066 A.H./26th December 1655) I gave leave to Mohammad Sultan and asked him to reach Nander and stop there.[5]

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1. A. S , III, p. 222.

2. *Nishan* : An instruction, order, or communication issued by a member of the royal family to anyone except the emperor.

3. *Ruqqet* 10 : 96.

4. *Adab*, 60b; M. U., Eng. Tr , II, p. 189; *Aurangzeb & his Times* by Faruqi, p. 284.

5. *Ibid*

On the receipt of Aurangzeb's letter the Emperor sanctioned the invasion of Golkunda if Abdullah Qutb Shah defied the Imperial orders to release Amin Khan and his family and failed to restore his confiscated property. Aurangzeb in response to Shahjahan's letter wrote, "Qutb-ul-Mulk even after receiving our Majesty's order and knowing of my son's (Mohd. Sultan's) arrival at Nander, has not set Mir Jumlah's son free."[1] Now Mohammad Sultan was ordered (10th January 1656) to enter Golkunda. While Mohammad Sultan was marching towards Golkunda, Aurangzeb informed the Emperor that "Mohammad Sultan is approaching Haidrabad and inspite of my letter to Abdullah Qutb Shah (based on) Your Majesty's instructions, he has not yet released Mir Jumlah's family".[2]

As soon as Abdullah Qutb Shah received the news of the approach of the Imperial army, he released Mohammad Amin Khan and his mother and they waited upon Mohammad Sultan at a distance of 12 *kos* (24 miles) from Haidrabad. But Qutb Shah did not restore his confiscated property.[3] Therefore, Sultan Mohammad continued his march towards the city. While he was encamping near the Husain Sagar tank, the Qutb Shahi troops made their appearance and threatened to open offensive. Upon this Mohammad Sultan attacked them and drove them to the city wall. Next day, 24th January 1656, he entered the city of Haidrabad and enormous booty fell into his hands. So, under pressure of the military impact Abdullah Qutb Shah not only fled to the fort of Golkunda (6 miles from the city of Haidrabad) but also restored Mir Jumlah's property and begged for peace, on the 29th January 1656.[4] Being a devoted son and loyal officer, Sultan Mohammad declined to entertain such a proposal in his father's absence and without his permission. On the other hand, though Abdullah continued to send presents and repeat

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1. *Adab*, 63b.

2. *Adab*, 65b.

3. A.S., III, p. 223; M.U., Eng. Tr., II, p, 189 ; Manucci, ', p. 234: *Shahjahan Namah*, Elliot & Dowson, VII, p. 110-11.

4. *Ibid.*

his proposal of peace, he was sparing no efforts in collecting war materials. He even solicited help from the Adil Shah.[1]

When Aurangzeb arrived (6th Feb. 1656) within one *kos* (2 miles) of the fort, 15000 strong Qutb Shahi soldiers opened the volley of fire. Thus, Abdullah Qutb Shah accentuated the situation further. Aurangzeb being an able general and master of strategy opened the siege of the fort. It lasted from 7th February 1656 to 30th March, 1656.[2] Finding himself in most precarious position Abdullah Qutb Shah solicited peace through the mediation of Prince Dara Shikoh and Jahan Ara Begum, who were growing afraid of the rising power and influence of Aurangzeb lest he should in future on that basis claim the throne. On the other hand he sent his son-in-law Mir Ahmad and Mir Fasih with tribute to Aurangzeb,[3] who wrote to Mir Jumlah that, "Qutb-ul-Mulk is now craving pardon, has sent his son-in-law Mir Ahmad to me, and has promised that his mother would wait on me and that his daughter would be married to my son. But I wish to send him to the wilderness of destruction". But Mir Jumlah, who still retained some regard for his erstwhile master, did not want to allow Aurangzeb to proceed to extremities. After crossing the river Krishna on the 8th March 1656, he came to Aurangzeb's camp at Golkunda on the 20th March, 'more as a prince than as a noble' with 6000 cavalary, 15000 infantry, 150 elephants and enormous wealth". When Abdullah's mother, 'the chaste lady', visited Aurangezeb for peace-terms,[4] the latter expressed his readiness to restore the kingdom on the condition of payment of one *Crore* rupees as a tribute and of giving Abdullah's daughter in marriage to Prince Mohammad Sultan who would be nominated successor to the throne.

While these negotiations were going on, Aurangzeb received his fathers's instructions asking him to raise the siege and quit the territory. Therefore on the 30th March 1656, Aurangzeb concluded

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1. M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 190; *Adab*, 65b; *Aurangzeb & his Times* p.287.
2. *Aurangzeb & his Times*, p. 291.
3. A.S., III, p. 227.
4. A S., III, p. 228; M. U., II, Eng. Tr., II, p. 190.

peace[1] with Abdullah Qutb Shah on payment of an indemnity of one *Crore* of rupees and arrears of tribute and the marriage of his (Abdullah Qutb Shah's) daughter to Mohammad Sultan. The bride along with ten *lacs* as a marriage gift was brought with all respects to the quarter of Mohammad Sultan.[2] Thus, both peace and marriage were celebrated at one and the same time and with much pomp and show.

During his stay at Golkunda Aurangzeb tried to win over Mir Jumlah with soft words and alluring promises. He was keen for his friendship because he was a brave leader and a wealthy man. He was convinced that the Mir would prove very helpful to him in the successful prosecution of his ambitious designs. In his talk with Mir Jumlah he often complained against his father's attitude and remarked that Shahjahan was the father of Dara, while he, on his side could never find a more kind father than him. Thus Aurangzeb centred all his hope in Mir Jumlah and called him his philosopher and guide. It is said that the prince gave his word of honour to the Mir that if he he became the emperor he would raise him to the highest position in the court and his son Mohammad Amin Khan would occupy the second place and would receive princly privileges. He entreated him not enter into friendly relations with Dara. Mir Jumlah, on his part, promissed that he would support him with his entire strength,[3] whenever there would be any occasion for the same.

Mir Jumlah accompanied Aurangzeb upto Indur[4] (2nd May, 1656) where he was allowed to leave for the court. He was escorted by Qazi Arif Kashmiri. On his way to the court Mir Jumlah recei-

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1. In his letter to Shah Abbas II of Iran, Abdullah Qutb Shah has made a mention about the circumstances in which he was forced to conclude peace with the Mughals. He also tells us that it was due to the complicity of Mohd. Saeed with Aurangzeb that he had to face such a situation.

For the contents of this letter See, Makatib, Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah, Salar Jung, Adab, Nasr Farsi, No. 295 ; Also quoted by Prof. H K. Sherwani in his article, "Reign of Abdullah Qutb Shah (1626 1672) Political and Military Aspects", J. I. H , XLV, Part I, April 1967,

2. A.S., III, p. 229; M.U., II, Eng. Tr., II, p. 191,

3. *Ibid.*

4. Present Nizamabad.

ved an imperial *firman* dated 10th April 1655,[1] brought by Mohammad Beg, conferring on him the Mughal title of *Muazzam Khan*,[2] the gift of a standard and drums.[3] The Emperor was keenly desirous of making use of Mir Jumlah's diplomatic and military skill in recovering the fortress of Qandhar. When Aurangzeb learnt of the imperial favour to Mir Jumlah, he became highly delighted and he wrote to him that, "I am ever desirous of seeing yours plans fulfilled, I am not fully satisfied at your present comparatively lower status. I would try for conferment of further favours on you and I hope it will materialise in no time, even if it will be the cause of jealousy of the enemies."[4]

During his journey to the court, Muazzam Khan was duly honoured at the places enroute. Manucci writes that, "Where ever he passed the governors of the places came out to greet him, doing him great honour and giving him presents, all by orders of the king. Upon his arrival close to Delhi the greatest commanders were sent out to greet and escort him. Instructions were issued that all along his route the streets and shops should be well decorated in the same manner as is done at the time of royal procession passing".[5] On the 25th *Ramzan* 8th July, 1656, the Emperor ordered Qasim Khan and Danishmand Khan, the *mir atish*[6] and the *mir bakshi*[7] respectively,

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1. *Firman* : A royal order bearing the seal of the Emperor.

2. Henceforward, he is referred as Muazzam Khan though some of the modern historians continue to call him as Mir Jumlah which is incorrect.

3 A.S., III, p. 230; Adab, 81b, 82b.

4 Adab, 82a-b; M. U. (Persian) III, p. 534-35 and Eng. Tr. II, p. 191; Manucci, I, pp. 236-37.

5. Storia, I, p. 237.

6. *Mir Atish* (Lord of fire) : He was the head of the artillary & was also known as *Daragha-e-Topkhanah'* (Superintendent of the Cannon department). See, *The Army of the Indian Moghuls by* W. Irvine, II, 152-55.

7. *Mir Bakhsi* (Paymaster General) : He was the head of the military department The salary bills of an officers were calculated & passed by him. For details see, *Ibid*., p. 38.

to go to the outskirts of the city and escort him.[1] On that lucky day he was received with great pomp and was given the highest place in the royal audience.[2]

Muazzam Khan made a valuable *peshkash* (presentation) of 1000 *muhars* and some other precious stones to the Emperor Shahjahan. It is said that on this occasion he presented '*Kohinoor*' to the Mughal Emperor. In return, the Emperor gave him a special robe, a jewelled inkpot, an ornamented sword, 5 *lacs* of rupees in cash, a *mansab* of 6000 *zat* 6000 *sawar*, horses and elephants and appointed him *Wazir*[3], in place of his favourite Sadullah Khan who had died on 7th April, 1656. Not only this, the Emperor was so pleased that he bestowed on him the territory of Karnatak as rent-free land for seven years.

Shortly after, the Emperor (Shahjahan) asked Muazzam Khan to recruit an army for a campaign against the Shah of Persia to recover the fortress of Qandhar[4]. But Muazzam Khan was reluctant to undertake the adventure, he was more interested in the Deccan, where he had passed the golden days of his life.[5] So he appeared before the Emperor with some costly presents and a few precious jewels. During the course of the interview he represented that if Qandhar produced such precious stones, His Majesty may undertake the labour of going there, or could despatch some loyal vassal to take, but in his opinion, His Majesty had better send some trusty person to conquer the lands, where a rich variety of such stones are to be found.[6] He further assured the Emperor that he within a short time would deliver to his hands the two Deccan kingdoms which

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1. A.S., III p. 231 ; *Adab*, 83a; Manucci, I, p. 237 ; M.U. (Persian) III, pp 535 and Eng. Tr. II, p. 191.

2. *Ibid*.

3. A. S., III, p. 231 ; M. U. (Persian) III, p. 535 and Eng. Tr. II, p. 191.

4. Manucci, I, 237.

5. M.U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 191.

6. Manucci, I, pp. 237-38; Bernier. p. 22 ; M. U. Eng. Tr., II, p. 192.

would make him the lord of all the coast of Coromondal and Gerzelin (Ginjili)".[1] Meanwhile it was reported that Ibrahim Adil Shah, the ruler of Bijapur, had died on 4th November 1656 and his officers have selected a man of obscure origin as his successor and designated him as Ali Adil Shah II.[2] Shahjahan expressed much satisfaction and happiness at the representation of Muazzam Khan whom he considered to be an expert in the Deccan affairs. Therefore, he decided to send an army under his command to the Deccan.[3]

But Dara was much upset with the decision of his father because from the very outset he was against Muazzam Khan. Manucci writes that "Not content with having affronted so many, he must need ridicule the great soldier Mir Zamula (Mir Jumlah) when he arrived at his father's court. He ordered the noble's sword, that he was wearing at his waist, to be stolen as soon as he entered the royal palace by active fellows, of whom he kept a number for the execution of such like tricks. In addition, he ordered his buffoons several times to initiate the gait and the gesture of the said *Mir Jumlah*, making mock of him".[4] So he tried his best to obstruct the execution of this undertaking. He was suspicious of Muazzam Khan' integrity and apprehended that his arrival in the Deccan would further strengthen Aurangzeb's position there. But Aurangzeb had already requested the Emperor to send Muazzam Khan which was very essential for his success in that region. In a letter to Muazzam Khan, Aurangzeb writes, "I have read your letter, and all that you

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1. Manucci, I, pp. 237-38; Bernier, p. 22; M. U. Eng. Tr. II, p. 192.

2. The author of *Basatin-us-Salatin* devotes a paragraph to his birth and his words indicate that he was the son of Mohammad Shah by a women of questionable position. The historian has cleverly avoided to mention her name or status. He only adds, however, that, the Sultan was "happy to receive this great gift and kindness". Aurangzeb's envoy at the court of Bijapur, Mohammad Zaman Khan, calls him "adopted son of obscure origin". (*pisar-e-khwandah--majhul alnasb*). *Basatin*, p. 361-62 ; Introduction of *Ruqqat* by Sayyid Najib Ashraf, p. 319.

3. *Ibid*.

4. Manucci, I, pp. 225-26.

have written to me on His Majesty's behalf. I have reported the actual facts to His Majesty and I am recounting the same to you. I am busy collecting troops, about the paucity of which in this province you know so well. I have given instructions to the commanders of forts on the frontier to be vigilant because the suppression of this disturbance is absolutely necessary. If the reports from Bijapur are confirmed and the news of the death of its ruler, is confirmed, we shall have to turn our attention in that direction as well. In this also, adequate preparations are necessary. I hope you will acquaint His Majesty with these facts. Considering any delay inadvisable you start immediately and not let the opportunity to slip away."[1] Accordingly, Shahjahan at the request of his son Prince Aurangzeb deputed Muazzam Khan who was very eager to go to the Deccan. His son Mohammad Amin Khan was given an increment of 1000 *zat* in his *mansab* of 2000 *zat* and 1000 *sawar*, and was ordered to officiate till the return of his father. In December 1656 Muazzam Khan left the capital along with famous generals such as Mahabat Khan, Rao Chatrasal, Najabat Khan and others. He arrived at Aurangabad on 18th January 1657, where he joined his friend and future master Aurangzeb. The Prince after holding consultations with Muazzam Khan set out for the invasion of Bijapur.

Both Prince Aurangzeb and Muazzam Khan reached Bidar[2] (28th February) and opened the siege of the fort, which was one of the strongest in the Deccan. It was defended by Siddi Marjan, a veteran general[3]. The invaders distributed entrenchments and planted outposts round the fort. The officers were ordered to be vigilant round the clock. The enemy opened an attack on the imperialists but was repulsed with heavy losses. On 29th March 1657, the invaders directed their fire on the walls of the fort and they succeeded in breaching it. Eventually they were successful in capturing the fort (30th March) which was the key for the conquest of the Deccan.[4]

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1. *Adab*, 118a ; M.U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 192.
2. *Adab*, 109b.
3. *Adab*, 110a-b.
4. Being a strong and well defended fort, it took the Mughals almost a full month to capture it.

After capturing the fort of Bidar, Muazzam Khan and Prince Aurangzeb left for Kalyani on 27th April 1657. They reached there on 3rd May 1657 and the same day they completed their plan of investing the fort. They started digging trenches and establishing outposts to bring the target within the range of cannon fire. The enemy delivered a heavy attack on Muazzam Khan's side, but had to retire with heavy losses. One day when the Bijapuris with 30,000 troops fell on the Mughals, Aurangzeb moved forward to repulse them. Meantime Muazzam Khan with selected generals like Shah Nawaz Khan, Mahabat Khan, Rao Chhatrasal and Shamsuddin Kheshgi attacked the enemy from other sides and broke their ranks. A large number of them were slained and the remaining were put to flight. A few days later, the enemy according to their usual practice ventured forth and made hostile demonstrations. So, on 22nd July 1657, Aurangzeb directed Muazzam Khan, Prince Mohammad Sultan and other generals such as Mahabat Khan, Rao Chhatrasal and Dilir Khan to deal with the enemy. The Bijapuris were defeated and they suffered heavy casualties. In the end Dilawar Khan Habashi, the *qiladar*[1] delivered the keys of the fort to the imperialists on 1st August 1657.

The success immensely pleased and satisfied the Emperor who conferred rewards on his son Prince Mohammad Aurangzeb and other generals. Muazzam Khan was honoured with a special robe and some *mahals* of the Karnatak territory, yielding a revenue of 4 *crores* of *dams*[2], were confirmed in his possession. The tract had been seized by Mir Jumlah before he had entered royal service.[3]

Now the road of Bijapur was virtually open and it was only a question of time. But Aurangzeb's success roused Dara's jealousy,[4]

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1. *Qiladar* : Commandant of a fort, castle or garrison.

2. *Dams* : Plural of *dam*, a small coin of which 40 made a rupee.

3. A.S., III, p. 261.

4 "Two years earlier Aurangzeb had complained to his elder sister, Jahan Ara Begum, that Dara ..... has sent his servant, Mulla Shawqi, with some Isharat (messages) to accept the requests of the ruler of Bijapur ....." See *Ruqqat*, 27 :159.

and the Bijapuris intrigued at the court to prevent Aurangzeb's progress in their territory. So at the intercession of Dara, Shahjahan ordered Aurangzeb to conclude peace with Ali Adil Shah.

Shahjahan fell ill on the 7th *Zilhijja* 1067 A. H./6th September 1657. Its report occasioned disturbances in some parts of the empire.[1] Dara Shikoh, who considered himself to be the real heir-apparent and had the reins of government in his hands, even when his father was in good health, now assumed control of the entire administration.[2] Being jealous of Muazzam Khan, who was a close friend of his rival Prince Aurangzeb, he dismissed him from the post of *wazir* on the charge of disobedience. To reduce Aurangzeb's power, he issued urgent orders recalling high generals like Mahabat Khan, Rao Chatrasal[3] etc. who left the Deccan with their contingents without obtaining due permission from the Viceroy.[4] Muazzam Khan was also ordered to return to the court after capturing Parenda.[5]

Aurangzeb had sent Muazzam Khan to capture the fort of Parenda towards the end of September 1657, and he himself had set out for Bidar, where he reached on the 9th of October. But, with the departure of Mahabat Khan, Rao Chatrasal and others for the court, the army of Muazzam Khan had been considerably depleted.

The political situation in the empire in general and in the Deccan in particular had become fluid because of vague reports of the Emperor's illness, the high-handedness of Dara and consequently prospects of a civil war. This led Aurangzeb to think that the Parenda affair would not be an easy task and it could not be promptly settled. Therefore, he directed Muazzam Khan to try to effect conciliation. He wrote to Muazzam Khan "Give up all ideas of collecting *peshkash* and conquering territories. Only with good

1. M.L., II, p. 4; M.A., p. 3; A. N., p. 28.
2. M.L., II, p. 5; M.A., p. 3.
3. A.S., III, p. 266 ; A.N., p. 29; M.U., Eng. Tr., II., p. 192.
4. A.S., III, pp. 263, 267, 267; A.N., p. 29.
5. A.S., III, pp. 263, 266, 267; A.N., p. 29.

treatment the enemy might be won over". He further stressed that there was no time to achieve the object by force. His concluding remark was "in this extreme situation you should try to press sincere friendship; whatever is possible without loss of time".[1] Accordingly, Muazzam Khan tried to win over Ikhlas Khan the chief minister of Bijapur. But his efforts ended in smoke owing to the murder of Ikhlas Khan on 11th of November 1657. Upon this Aurangzeb asked Muazzam Khan to return to Bir without wasting any more time. When he reached there, he received a communication from the Prince that he should encamp there with Prince Muazzam and make fresh efforts to bring the Bijapuris to senses.

While Muazzam Khan and Prince Muazzam were staying a Bir the former received a letter from his son informing him of the current politics at the Mughal court. Muazzam Khan communicated the contents of his son's letter to Aurangzeb and sought his advice with regard to the reply he should sent to his son. In reply Aurangzeb wrote to him : "It is futile to teach wisdom to Lukman. Whatever strikes would be according to the cannons of wisdom.....write whatever seems desirable".

On his part Muazzam Khan had failed to convince Dara of his fidelity. The situation had become intriguing and alarming. On the other hand, he was reluctant to come out boldly to say that he was committed to Aurangzeb and cannot leave him alone. On his failure in the Parenda campaign, Dara recalled Muazzam Khan to the court because he wanted to separate him from Aurangzeb. Accordingly, he issued an urgent order on behalf of the Emperor asking Muazzam Khan to leave the Deccan for the capital. This order was communicated to Muazzam Khan through Aurangzeb who sent along with it a covering letter of his own. Muazzam Khan received both the letters on 22nd November 1657. In his letter Aurangzeb wrote "Friend ! May God help you ! What shall I write about my own troubled state or describe how my days are passing. I have no remedy save patience".

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1. A. S., III, pp. 263, 266, 267; A. N., p. 29.
2. *Adab*, 162b-63a, 200b-02b.

But high ambition was surging in Aurangzeb's heart. As a bitter conflict lay ahead he rightly thought that the departure of such an astute politician and a resourceful general who had so much wealth and army at his command would be injurious to his interests. To safeguard his own interests he sent a message to Muazzam Khan saying that as he regarded him as his well-wisher, he would like that he should see him before his departure to the court.[1] But Muazzam Khan tried to avoid this meeting and replied, "As I have received a royal order summoning me to the court, as an officer and a loyal servant I have no other alternative but to comply with it"[2]. He was clear in his mind that any further stay in the Deccan would expose his family to great hazard at the hands of Dara Shikoh at the capital. It might even lead to a bloody grave for his kith and kins. But Prince Aurangzeb sent a second message to Muazzam Khan through his son Prince Muazzam saying that even though he was going to the court; he (Aurangzeb) was quite confident of his loyalty but as he had certain important matters to discuss with him, he wanted him to come to him and thereafter he could proceed to the court.[3] Muazzam Khan's mind was set at rest by Prince Muazzam's flattering words and he came to Aurangabad about 1st January 1658. But as soon as he entered the private apartments of the Prince he was arrested and was sent as prisoner to the fort of Daulatabad. All his treasures and property were also confiscated, and his attendants were taken by the Prince in his own service. Thus Aurangzeb acquired means to carrying out his plan.

The arrest of Muazzam Khan had been misinterpreted by Manucci who writes: "These were forgeries. They were in very cordial terms. They showed him to be affectionate and friendly that Mir Jumlah declared it impossible to refuse to go .....Upon Mir Jumlah's arrival, Prince Aurangzeb made false display of affection, using him phrases of the greatest possible endearment, styling him *Baba* and *Babaji* that is to say 'Father' and 'Lord Father' embracing him repeatedly".[4] He

1. A.S , III, p. 282; M.U.. Eng. Tr., II, p. 193.
2. Manucci, I, p, 249; M.U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 193.
3. M.U., Eng. Tr. II, 193; Manucci, I, p. 249.
4. Manucci, I, p. 250.

adds that "Mir Jumlah appeared to be much incensed, and said that he was a most loyal subject of King Shahjahan".[1] But contradicting this statement he further remarks that "In public he reprimanded him (Aurangzeb) ; all this being a comedy"[2] to deceive the royal spies, so that they might report about his loyalty to Shahjahan and Dara."

But we cannot give implicit credence to the account of a foreign traveller, though some modern historians like Sir Jadunath Sarkar[3] and others have believed it in toto. Before coming to any definite conclusion it is necessary to assess the authenticity of Manucci's version in the context of the account given by court historian and other of contemporary writers.

Describing the arrest of Muazzam Khan, the author of *Amel-e-Saleh,* Mohammad Saleh Kambu writes: "Muazzam Khan, the best of officers and the head of this affair, through some evil manner, which was inconsistent with wise conduct and knowledge wanted, without permission of Aurangzeb, to go to the Emperor. . . . When the directions were carried out and the Khan came to his (Aurangzeb's) presence by the order of Aurangzeb, he was sent prisoner to the forts-of Daulatabad"[4]. Mohammad Saleh informs us further that Aurangzeb seized all his treasure, elephants and other property and put them in the charge of the State treasurers"[5].

The above statement is borne out by other contemporary historians. Mohammad Kazim, the author of *Alamgir Namah* writes : "In obedience to this order, the Khan marched with the army under his command to Aurangzeb, intending to proceed from there to the capital . . . . (Aurangzeb) as a matter of prudence and of state policy mad e him prisoner and detained him in the Deccan"[6] Aqil Khan

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1. Manucci, I, p. 250.
2. *Ibid.*
3. See, *History of Aurangzeb,* I, pp. 361-62.
4. A.S., III, p. 282.
5. *Ibid.*
6. A.N., p. 84.

Razi, the author of *Waqiat-e-Alamgiri* echoes the same version, "As soon as Muazzam Khan entered the private apartments of Aurangzeb, he was arrested. All his treasure and property were also confiscated and his attendants were taken by the Prince in his own service."[1]

Muazzam Khan's own wavering nature had caused suspicion in the mind of Prince Aurangzeb, consequently, he had him arrested. The Prince was well aware of the Mir's treachery against his erstwhile master, the ruler of Golkunda whom he had betrayed without any compunction. Prince Aurangzeb being a farsighted politician imprisoned the opportunist Muazzam Khan, so that he might not betray him also.

When Shahjahan received the report of Muazzam Khan's imprisonment, he condemned the unjustified action as also the confiscation of the property of an innocent Syed who was coming to the court in compliance with the royal *firman* and he ordered the release of the helpless Syed, "bidding Aurangzeb be aware of the day of retribution".[2] But, Aurangzeb much before the receipt of this order had represented that he had suspicions about the fidelity of Muazzam Khan ,and therefore he had imprisoned him, otherwise he would have joined the Deccanis.[3] So long as reports of continued illness of Shahjahan and supremacy of Dara Shikoh were in circulation in India, Aurangzeb kept Muazzam Khan under his surveillance in the fort of Daulatabad.[4]

After defeating Dara, "on Friday the 1st *Zilqad* 1068 A. H. 1. 22nd Jully 1658, after offering Friday prayer at a auspicious hour and a lucky moment, when the Sun was in the tenth sign of Zodiac he started the celebration of his coronation . . . . and took his seat on the throne of the extensive heaven-like empire of Hindustan".[5]

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1. *Waqiat*, p. 2.
2. M.U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 193.
3. M.U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 193.
4. *Ibid.*
5. M.L., II, pp. 39-40.

Now he thought that any further confinement of Muazzam Khan would be useless and purposeless, and that it would be good to release him because he could be usefully employed in the war against Shuja. Therefore, he issued orders for his release[1] and in his letter he apologised for his past conduct. He wrote, "I detained you for some reason.....The time has come when I should apologise to you.....It is highly imperative that a sincere well-wisher, versed in business like yourself, should remain in my court".[2] In another letter to Muazzam Khan, Aurangzeb wrote, "I imprisoned you not due to any disloyalty on your part. Only you showed carelessness in exertion and insisted on going back to the court at an inconvenient time and it was inadvisable to allow you to do so. However much I tried to make you realise that, I failed. So I was obliged to detain you, much against my will. Now, by God's grace my wish has been fulfilled[3] and life has come in the garden of kingdom of religion. My enemies have been humiliated. It is inhuman to detain you any longer. I don't want to keep an intelligent man like you unnecessarily without work". But this apology was nothing more than a trick of diplomacy and skill of pen-manship on the part of Aurangzeb.

The Emperor directed Muazzam Khan to come to court after rainy season. His confiscated properties were given back and he was appointed *Subahdar*[4] of Khandesh vice Wazir Khan who was transferred to Aurangabad.[5]

After hounding out Dara and pursuing him from place to place in the Punjab, Aurangzeb returned to the capital to check the rapid advance of his brother Shuja who was coming from Bengal to capture the throne of Hindustan. To utilize the services of Muazzam Khan, he sent an urgent order summoning him to his

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1. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
2. Now he became the Emperor of Hindustan.
3. *Adab*, 95a-b.
4. *Subahdar*: One holding a Subah (province) or provincial governor.
5. A. N. pp. 218-19.

presence, leaving the affairs of Khandesh under the charge of some trust-worthy person.[1] Meanwhile he had despatched his son Prince Mohammad Sultan by the end of November 1658, to bar the path of Shah Shuja. On 21st December 1658. Aurangzeb himself marched to the east and at Karrah, — eight miles west of Khajwa,— on 2nd January 1659, Prince Mohammad Sultan earned the honour of presenting himself before the Emperor.[2] It was at this auspicious place that Muazzam Khan, who had covered the long distance very rapidly, had the audience of the new Emperor two days before the fateful battle. He was recipient of many honours and numerous favours.[3] He now became the right hand man of Aurangzeb. Two days before the battle, the imperial army was arranged in the field according to the advice of Muazzam Khan so that owing to vastness of numbers "nothing was visible except the banners on the line-breaking elephants and the enemy-killing spears, shining like lightning". Ninety thousand horsemen stood ready in columns after columns on the dreary plain of Khajwa.[4] But the guns of Shuja were so placed that they had clear advantage over the death emitting artillery of his rival. But Muazzam Khan was a good tactician and an expert strategician. Having surveyed the situation carefully, he shifted the disposition of his artillery in the darkness of the night and placed 40 of his guns right in front of the enemy. Khwafi Khan, the author of '*Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*', informs us that "with a view to arranging his men and look after them, he (Muazzam Khan) took no rest during the night".[5] But about the fourth watch of the night a great tumult arose in his army owing to the treacherous conduct of Raja Jaswant Singh.[6]

Describing this episode, Khwafi writes that Raja Jaswant Singh's support of Aurangzeb was based on hypocracy. He had

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1. A. N., pp. 218-19.
2. M.L., II, p. 48.
3. *Ibid.*
4. M.L., II, p. 49.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
6. *Ibid.*

been covered with it from the very day of creation. He wore the illfamed garb of flight. His sordid nature always led him to his ultimate ruin. With stupid thinking and evil intentions, he sent a friendly message to Shah Shuja saying that "towards the end of the night I would make a surprise attack on the imperial army and after plundering the camp would flee from there. When this happens the Emperor would naturally order his men to pursue the defectors. At that moment your few brave solidiers should make a sudden charge on the imperial army."[1] Accordingly, when three or four hours (*gharis*) of the night still remained that wretched fellow in league with the other Rajputs such as Ram Singh Rathor, Mahesh Das with their contingents of soldiers plundered the imperial camp, the equipment and baggages of the *amirs* and the prince and whatever came in his way. "The plundering hands of the Rajputs, the vagabonds and the looters, who had been waiting for such an opportunity even reached the stables and stores of the imperial camp. There was complete panic throughout the camp". Khwafi Khan writes further that, "even the most sincere of his (emperor's) followers began to waver, what could be said about the cowards and traitors?" But inspite of this disturbance not the slightest change occured in the firm attitude of Auranzeb. He maintained his dignity and his equilibrium. He had by his side a general like Muazzam Khan as his adviser, and so not the least sign of anxiety was visible on his face and he engaged himself in preparations for the impending battle according to the pre-arranged plan. In place of Raja Jaswant Singh, Islam Khan was appointed commander of the right wing. Muazzam Khan was given discretionary powers to make such alterations in the disposition of the troops as he deemed necessary according to the time and situation. According to Munucci it was on Muazzam Khan's instance that Aurangzeb wrote a brief letter to Allavardi Khan, then the chief advisor of Shah Shuja saying: "Allavardi Khan: If this day you wish to make me king of Hindustan, it would suffice to induce Shah Shuja to get down from his elephant during the battle, and I pledge you my word to reward you and all your family

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1. M. L., II, p. 51.

who are on my side. I have the strongest hope that you will not fail me".

On the day of battle Muazzam Khan's elephant was stationed next to the Royal elephant to enable him to tender his help and advice in critical moments. Shuja's right wing led by Syed Alam routed the imperial left wing and then the enemy attacked the centre which was under the command of the Emperor. During the conflict the latter's elephant driver received a fatal blow and was killed. According to Manucci the Emperor was about to dismount, but it was Muazzam Khan "who was quite near, doing his duty as a good leader (and from him nothing else could be expected).....He shouted in a loud voice : "Kaem ! Kaem (Qaim ! Qaim)[1]" Steady ! Steady ! Thus Muazzam Khan saved the situation, when the battle was passing through a critical phase. Meanwhile some of the generals of Shah Shuja like Mukarram Khan Safavi, Abdul Rahman Khan and Sanjar Beg had abandoned their master and come over to Aurangzeb. This decided the course of the conflict. Shuja suffered a crushing defeat; and for this success much credit goes to Muazzam Khan.

After his defeat at Khajwa Shuja fled towards the east in great haste and depression. Aurangzeb considered it imperative that he should not be allowed to make a halt anywhere, and so he asked Prince Mohammad Sultan to pursue him with much speed. A large number of troops was placed under his command. The Emperor stayed at Khajwa and held a *darbar* for conferring honours in the shape of promotions, cash, jewels, titles and permission to use drums according to the status and performance of each noble in the field of battle. Muazzam Khan, who had played an important role was confirmed in his former post of *wazir* and was awarded distinctions exceeding those of all others ; he got the *mansab* of ***haft hazari*** (7000 *zat*/7000 *sawar*) and a reward of 1,00,000 rupees in cash.[2]

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1. Manucci, II, p. 329.

2. A.N., p. 267 ; *Waqiat*, p. 123; *Life of Mir Jumla*, p. 151; But according to Khwafi Khan "Muazzam Khan was given a distinction over all others ; he got an additional *mansab* 7000/7000 and his rank was thus raised to 12000" (See M. L., II, p. 59), which seems to be rather improbable for no other historian either contemporary or later has mentioned this.

Before his departure for the capital on 14th January Aurangzeb appointed Muazzam Khan, the *wazir* as *ataliq* of Mohammad sultan, and he ordered other nobles to join him.[1] Muazzam Khan immediately marched to the east and joined Prince Mohammad Sultan at Allahabad. Here they learnt of Shuja's entrenchment at Benares. They crossed the flooded Ganges and reached Chunar. When the unfortunate Shuja, who had an intention of raising an army to meet the imperialists, heard of this, he lost heart and fled from Bahadurpur towards Patna. When the imperial army arrived at Benares, they found nothing but the deserted camp of the fugitive Prince. They halted there for two days and then under the leadership of Muazzam Khan left for Patna.

After arriving at Patna Shuja wasted a few valuable days of his life in marrying his son Zainul Abidin with the daughter of an old officer named Zulfiqar Khan Qaramanlu. Meanwhile, Muazzam Khan had arrived within 20 miles west of Patna. In sheer fright, Shuja marched towards Monghyr which he reached on 19th February. The imperialists captured Patna on 22nd February and were joined by Fidai Khan.[2]

At Monghyr Shuja mounted the guns on the walls, posted the soldiers in the trenches and ordered Raja Bahruz, the *zamindar* of Kharagpur to guard the southern hills, so that the imperialists might not come through the difficult road which runs through it to Rajmahal. He also posted as pickets European gunners at some strategic points.[3] Finding the road from Patna to Monghyr completely blocked, Muazzam Khan without loss of time decided to cut Shuja's communication in the rear. He won over Raja Bahruz and under his guidance marched through the hills and jungles of Kharagpur making a detour round Monghyr.[4] Thus betrayed by Raja Banruz and outflanked by the imperialists, Shuja was forced to leave Mong-

1. *Waqiat*, p. 123.
2. A.N., p. 493; *Waqiat*, pp. 124-25 E. F. I., X, p. 280
3. A.N., pp. 493; *History of Aurangzeb.*, II, p 568.
4. A N, pp. 492; *Waqiat*, p. 125 : T.S. f. 113b, Haqiri 143-45; *History of Aurangzeb*, p. 569.

hyr on 6th March and he halted beyond Telliagarhi (Rangamati mentioned in *Alamgir Namah*)[1] for 15 days from 10th March to 24th March. Here he spent his time in blocking the roads which runs through the plain. The Ganges protected his right while the hills of Rajmahal stretching from the Ganges to Birbhum blocked the left. He also sent one of his generals named Isfandiar Khan Mamuri to Khwajah Kamal Afghan, the *zamindar* of Birbhum and Chotanagar asking him to prevent Muazzam Khan from making another detour, thus enabling him to fall on his left flank.[2]

When Muazzam Khan was apprised of the defensive measure of Shuja, he very tactfully won over Khwajah Kamal Afghan, the *zamindar* who showed the way as well as provided food and fodder while passing through his territory. On 28th March they passed through Suri, the chief town of Birbhum.[3] But on the way to Akbarnagar (Rajmahal) at Pialapur when a rumour of Dara's victory had reached there some of the treacherous Rajputs like Kunwar Ram Singh, Rao Bhao Singh and others deserted Muazzam Khan. Muazzam Khan did not waste his valuable time in dissuading or punishing the peserters because he had still about 25000 soldiers at his disposal. He advanced swiftly and steadily cutting off Shuja's retreat towards Dacca.[4] On receipt of the report of the treachery of the *zamindar* of Birbhum and the advance of imperialists through his lands Shuja was completely upset. He evacuated Rangamati for Akbarnagar (Rajmahal) where he reached on 27th March. Meanwhile, the imperialists had turned to the north-east in order to cut off Shuja's passage to Dacca through Ganges near Murshidabad, and reached Belghata, 30 miles from Shuja'sposition.[5]

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1. A.N., p. 495.

2. A.N., p. 496; Storia, I, p. 334.

3. A.N.. p. 497 ; Haqiri, 148-51; Tavernier, 1, pp. 272-73; T. S., 113b.

4. A.N., p. 498; Haqiri, 151-53; T. S., ff. 115b-16b; *Waqiat*, p. 126.

5. Belghata is about 2 miles west of Janigpur.

On hearing that the imperialists had pitched their camp on the bank of the Ganges under the command of Muazzam Khan, Shuja called a council of war to consider new developments. On the advice of his supporters led by Mirza Jan Beg, Shuja decided to shift his family and headquarters to Tanda (4 miles west to the fort of Gaur) and to continue the struggle with the help of his powerful flotilla. So, he planned to cross the Ganges at Daghachi[1], but when he reached at the ferry on 1st April 1659, a sudden storm prevented his embarkation for three days. He stayed at Rajmahal and on 4th April crossed the Ganges at Daghachi and arrived at Firuzpur with his family.

As soon as Muazzam Khan heard of the evacuation of Rajmahal by Shuja, he rushed to occupy the deserted city which the imperialists occupied on 13th April. Zulfiqar Khan was appointed its governor with an army of 5000 men. About 4000 of Shuja's soldiers failed to cross the river and they returned to Rajmahal. They were induced by Zulfiqar Khan to join the imperial service. Thus, the whole country on the bank of the Ganges from Rajmahal to Hugli fell into the hands of the imperialists.[2]

With the arrival of Shuja on the eastern bank of the Ganges and the capture of Rajmahal by the imperialists the war now entered a new phase. The Ganges separated the rival armies and the conflict became a naval contest in which Shuja with flotilla appeared to have the upper hand. His position was like that of an alligator while his opponent resembled a tiger.[3] The progress of the imperialists was impeded by the swift flowing river and they could no advance even an inch without a '*nawara*' or flotilla. Hence Muazzam Khan was in a fix. But he did not lose heart and faced the situation with courage and resourcefulness. Thanks to his untiring efforts within the brief interval of a fortnight he was able to assem-

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1. A.N., p.498-98; *Waqiat*, p. 127; T. S., f. 116a; Faqiri, 153; E.F.I., X, p. 281,

2. A.N., p. 501; T.S., ff. 116a-b; *Waqiat*, p. 128; E.F.I., X, pp. 281-83.

3. T.S., ff. 116a-17b; *Waqiat*, p. 128; E.F.I., X, pp. 282-84.

ble a few boats. Taking Prince Mohammad Sultan with him, he left for Daghachi on April 14th.

At Baqarpur, opposite bank of Daghachi Shuja's general Syed Quli Khan had entrenched his artillery, while Shuja himself was in the rear, keeping his flotilla ready to strike in front. There lay an island in the mid-stream ; it commanded a strategic position. Muazzam Khan with his innate common sense grasped the importance of the island from the military point of view and he decided to capture it by night. With about 2000 men, some generals like Zulfiqar Khan, Fath Jung, Lodi Khan, Sujan Singh Bundela, he crossed the river and captured the island. When in the morning Shuja heard of dare-devil venture of the imperialists, he ordered his soldiers to board the boats and force the enemy out of the island. But the attempt failed.[1]

Muazzam Khan's next plan was to cross the river and to deliver a surprise attack on Shuja but it was not possible with half a dozen of boats. So he changed his plan and decided to post his entire army all along the western bank of Rajmahal upto Suti. Accordingly he posted Mohammad Murad Beg at Rajmahal in the extreme north, Prince Mohammad Sultan accompanied by Zulfiqar Khan and Islam Khan remained at Daghachi, Ali Quli Khan at Dunapur, 8 miles south of Daghachi and he himself took his post at Suti at the head of six or seven thousand troops.

Muazzam Khan selected Suti because he was informed by some local men that here the river was narrow and easily fordable. Here he halted to prevent the crossing over of any boat or enemy to Shuja. He closed entirely all passages and ferries. Relying on the information which he had already received, Muazzam Khan attempted to cross the river, but failed due to sudden rise of water in the Ganges.[2]

During his stay at Suti, Muazzam Khan sent his officers even upto Hugli and Kasimbazar to collect boats and within a fortnight

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1. A.N., pp. 501-03 ; T.S., f. 118a ; Haqiri, 154-62.
2. A.N , pp. 504 ; Haqiri, 165 ; *Waqiat*, p. 129 ; E. F. I., X, p. 283.

he was able to collect about a hundred boats of different types. O the first night Muazzam's men were unsuccessful in their attemp to cross the river, but better luck was in store for them when a strong wind began to blow and Shuja's men were off their guard Muazzam Khan seized the opportunity. He despatched twent imperial troopers and a party of his own retainers to cross the river Shuja was dismayed at this surprise move of the imperialists. H sent for Nurul Hasan from his post of duty because his negligenc was mainly responsible for it.[1]

Muazzam Khan relying on the reports of local men had under estimated the strength of Shuja who was more vigilant this time He had appointed Syed Alam Barha (Khan-e-Alam) with Mohtashim Khan in place of Nurul Hasan. When in the night of 2nd May Muazzam Khan's men attacked Syed Alam, they were repulsed At dawn on 3rd May, 73 boats of Muazzam Khan carrying abou 2000 men started ferrying to the opposite bank of the river. But Shuja's men emerged from the ambush and launched a heavy attack on them. The imperialists suffered heavy casualties, about half of them were either drowned or slain and about 500 of them were made prisoners. Some of them were afterwards put to death by order of Shuja.[2]

The cause of Muazzam Khan's failure has been wrongly indicated by some modern historians, who consider this attack as a fatal mistake on his part. They charge him with negligence and lack of foresight. But the author of '*Tarikh-e-Shah Shujai*' rightly observes that "this (move) was an act of wisdom and courage". Moreover, before taking this step Muazzam Khan had made local enquiries about his rival's resources. Mohammad Kazim rightly observes that Shuja was in an advantageous position with many of

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1. A.N., pp. 504-04 ; T.S., 118a ; Haqiri, 165-66 ; E.F.I., X, pp. 283-84.

2. T.S., 119a—b ; But according to Foster's letter from Kasimbazar dated 8th May 1659 "nearly 1000 of the enemies were killed and the Jellers or large boats of Shuja helped him to with the war against the small boats of the enemies. (See E.F.I., X, p. 284).

his fast moving boats while Muazzam Khan had only a few large boats This statement is confirmed by the *English Factory records* which say that "the jellores or large boats of Shuja helped him to win the war against the small boats of his enemy."[1]

Muazzam Khan now decided to launch a fresh and more powerful attack on Shuja. But paucity of large boats was still a hurdle before him. He had become wiser after the last tragedy. So he tried his best to collect as many boats as possible. He sent his agents in search of boatmen and carpenters to build new boats; and all big boats coming down the river were seized. Besides, he also wrote a letter to Daud Khan to recruit soldiers, collect boats and to march towards Bengal as speedily as possible. He further advised him to instruct Rozbihani troops to cross the river Kosi under the command of Rashid Khan and Chiragh Bahadur.[2] Accordingly, Daud Khan started from Patna on 13th May, at the head of 1500 cavalry and 2000 infantry.[3]

While Muazzam Khan was preoccupied with the preparations, Prince Mohammad Sultan deserted him in the dark and rainy night of 8th June 1659 and joined his uncle Shuja. There were various reasons for this *volte face*. Firstly, the prince was resentful of his secondary position ; Muazzam Khan enjoyed vast powers and over-shadowed and over-ruled him. Secondly, he was instigated by his youthful flatterers and his uncle to join him. Shuja sent him letters and presents and offered the hand of his daughter Gulrukh Bano Begum. Lastly, Prince Mohammad Sultan had been thrown off his wits because of the receipt of letter from his father in which he had directed Muazzam Khan "that having heard that Mohammad Sultan

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1. E. F. I., X, p. 284.

2. Haqiri, 172-74 ; A N., p. 513. According to English Factory records Daud Khan was commanded by Aurangzeb to cross the river at Patna and he marched along the northern bank in order to assail Shuja's right wing. E. F., X, p. 285.

3. Haqiri, 179 ; Pickering in his letter from Patna dated 16th May, writes that Dud Khan started at the head of 5000 horses ; and Camberlen in his letter dated 17th May states the date of departure as 17th May. E.F.I. X, p. 285.

had some secret communications with his uncle, Sultan Shuja, it was advisable that he should arrest his son and send him to court."[1]

The desertion of Prince Mohammad Sultan created a great uproar in the imperial camp at Daghachi. But Muazzam Khan's skill as a leader and his presence of mind saved the imperial army from almost fatal consequences. As soon as he heard of the terrible incident, he rode from Suti to Daghachi. He found the camp in utter disorder and despair. But he was not unnerved. It was not the first time that he had to face such a situation. He had, before this, witnessed the treacherous conduct of Raja Jaswant Singh who had not only abandoned the cause of his master but also looted and plundered the imperial camp. Without wasting any time, he summoned a council of war, created new hopes in the hearts of his colleagues and all of them agreed to obey him. Leaving Fidai Khan and Islam Khan at Daghachi, and Zulfiqar Khan at Rajmahal, he himself returned to Suti.

But outbreak of monsoon completely paralysed his military activity. So he ordered his men to go into cantonments. He also ordered his men to withdraw from the outposts of Daghachi, Dunapur and Suti. He pitched his camp at Masumbazar (Murshidabad) on a high tract of land having abundance of provisions. Zulfiqar Khan, Islam Khan and many others were posted at Rajmahal.[2]

With a view to starving out the imperialists Shuja sealed all means of communication with the city. He kept a strict watch on waters with his flotilla mounted with artillery, so that no provisions could be sent by Muazzam Khan from Murshidabad to Rajmahal. Besides, he threatened the traders and gave a free hand to freebooters to intercept all kinds of provisions and messages to the city. Edmond Foster in his letter to Davis dated 5th July 1659, says that Shuja had

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1. Tavernier, I, p. 361, Khwafi Khan blaming Shuja for the bitter relations between Prince and Mir Jumlah, says ; that Shuja conceived the idea of winning the Prince over his side by means of tricks and treachery which gain the feeling of young. M.L., II, p. 90; J.P.H.S., XIII, pt , II, p. 184.

2. A.N., pp. 512-13: Faqiri, 194—95; *Waqiat*, pp. 130-31.

given a free hand to all *zamindars* of the country to rob merchants or soldiers of their money and good horses on condition that they, would side with him. "Only what elephant they take they must return to him. The *zamindars* have begun already to stop the way between us and you, so that no merchants dare to pass with goods for fear of being taken from him, nor a peon can pass with a letter".[1] Thus as a consequence of such blockade, serious scarcity of food and fodder arose in the city of Rajmahal. Masum, the Shujaite historian who was an eye witness, gives a graphic description of this situation. He says :

"The flame of famine rose in such a way as if smoke came out of the earth and time.....and grain rose to price of gold. Coarse, red, bad-smelling rice and *daal* sold at nine seers a rupee..... The difficulties of work and food have reached such a point that men in search of rice are cutting their chests, but don't get it.....In the agony of hunger, men take morsels of poison .....price of rice seed is higher than that of a gem and a dish of seed is more useful to me than a pearl in hand.....butchers sell meat at a rupee per seer and if the poor want to take meat, they have to take their (own) meat. If the mouth has seen any meat, it is the flesh of his lips.....In the shops, dogs and cats are shrieking and cries of hungry men come out of mosques. The places of worship are deserted. The wine shops are without wine. There is no freshness in the garden of beauty ; fire of love has lost its warmth. Worship yields no fruit ; sin results in nothing."[2]

Both Aqil Khan and the Rozbihani followers of Muazzam Khan have used similar expressions to point out the tragic state of affairs at Rajmahal. Scarcity of food and fodder created tremendous distress and disorder in the army of Muazzam Khan and it had no alternative but to evacuate the city of Rajmahal.[3]

Taking advantage of the critical position of his enemy Shuja on 22nd August delivered a surprise attack on Rajmahal with

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1. E.F. I., X, p, 290.
2. T. S., ff. 126a-30b.
3. A. N., p. 515-16 ; T. S., ff. 126a-39a *Waqiat*, pp. 132-33, E.F.I., X, p. 289.

his war boats. Zulfiqar Khan due to his illness could not resist it and though other generals like Islam Khan fought bravely, eventually all of them had to withdraw and retreat to Muazzam Khan. In this way Shuja recaptured Rajmahal and re-established his position on the western bank of the Ganges.[1] But during this heart-rendering crisis Muazzam Khan did not sit silent at his oars. He incessantly strove to clear the southern routes of Hugli and even the south west of Bengal.

Success at Rajmahal spurred the ambition of Shuja and he now decided to take the field against Muazzam Khan. He despatched Itibar Khan and Fidai Khan against Daud Khan. Then he left Rajmahal via Dunapur, Daghachi and Suti at the head of 12000 men and a strong flotilla. He reached Balaghat in two months and encamped very close to the camp of Muazzam Khan. The rival armies were separated from each other by a *nalah*.[2] The battle started at about 1 1/2 *prahars*[3] of the day. At first Muazzam Khan forced Shuja to retreat towards Rajmahal, but soon Prince Mohammad Sultan arrived to help Shuja. Upon this Muazzam Khan being a master strategist planned to encircle the enemy. He crossed the *nalah* by the left bridge and thus arriving at the bank of Bhagirathi (near the village Gheria) he surrounded the enemy's rear commanded by Mir Isfandiyar Mamuri. He opened his cannonade and rockets. Hearing of Muazzam's attack Shuja and Mohammad Sultan hastened to the assistance of Mamuri. The battle lasted till one *prahar* of the night. Both sides were exhausted and reduced to sad plight. Shuja's general Isfandiyar was badly wounded. At last the rivals returned to their respective camps in a great distress and disorder.[4]

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1 A. N. pp. 516-19 ; T. S., 125b ; Haqiri 201-2 ; Tavernier, I, p. 275 ; E. F. I., X. p. 289-90.

2. A. N., p. 519-20 ; *Waqiat*, 134 ; T. S., f. 131 ; Haqiri, 326-31 ; E. F.I., X. p. 298

3. *Prahar or Pahar* : A fourth part of the day and of the night.

4. A. N., p. 525 ; Masum, the Shujaite historian says that if Shuja had charged forthwith Muazzam's position would have become wrose (T S., 133a-b) But Aqil Khan contradicting this statement says that Muazzam Khan surrounded Shuja in the village of Gheria and could have captured him if he had boldly attacked in the night. *Waqiat*, p. 155.

Muazzam Khan did not think it advisable to destroy his men in fruitless skirmishes. So, without wasting any more time he retired towards Murshidabad to wait for the reinforcement from the Emperor. Near Nashipur (12 miles north of Murshidabad) for several days Muazzam Khan faced Shuja's men. They wanted to cut off his line of retreat to Murshidabad. Meanwhile, as Muazzam Khan had anticipated, on the night of 26th Dec. 1659, Shuja received the heart-breaking report from Itibar Khan in which he informed him of his inability to resist Daud Khan.[1] Hence Shuja retreated towards Suti to cross the Bhagirathi and thus reach Tanda.[2]

Muazzam Khan had been waiting for this opportune moment. He dashed in the pursuit of Shuja. Covering a distance of three miles he overtook Shuja on 27 December near a *nalah*. From morning till evening there was a continuous discharge of cannons and muskets from either side. Fortunately for Muazzam Khan and unfortunately for Shuja, reinforcements came from the Emperor which strenghtened imperialists. On 28th December Shuja fled towards Suti. Muazzam Khan was close at his heels. He encamped half a mile beyond Suti facing Shah Shuja's men who were at Chilmari.[3] For four days there was exchange of fire between two parties. Meanwhile Nurul Hasan deserted Shuja's side and came over to Muazzam Khan. Finding himself in a hopeless position and unable to cross the river in the night of 1st January 1660, Shuja fled towards Dunapur and then to Daghachi in a great haste.[4] But Muazzam Khan gave him a hot pursuit, though in the way he was delayed by bad roads, *nalas* and damaged bridges.

Reaching Daghachi Muazzam Khan entrenched his light guns and ordered his generals to wait till the arrival of heavy artillery. Meanwhile, Shah Shuja's men turned round behind the *nalah* of Daghachi and opened fire from their heavy artillery against the enemy. But Muazzam Khan was determined not to allow the enemy

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1. A. N., pp. 524-26 ; T. S , ff. 133b 34a, Haqiri, 347-48.
2. A. N., p. 526 ; *Waqiat*, pp. 135-36 ; T. S., f 134a ; Haqiri 342.
3. A. N., pp. 526-28 ; Haqiri 359-60.
4. A. N., pp. 528-30.

a chance to escape. He kept them pre-occupied. Shortly after, the expected heavy artillery arrived. It was put into action atonce. About mid-night both the armies retired to their camps. Next day on 2nd January, Muazzam Khan marched towards Rajmahal while Shuja was marching parallel to him on the other side of the river. But Muazzam Khan according to his pre-conceived plan reached the city of Rajmahal on 11th January 1660 and thus the entire country west of the Ganges was lost to Shuja for ever.[1] Now Muazzam Khan had to crush Shuja's power on the eastern side of the Ganges.

During his stay at Rajmahal Muazzam Khan posted officers in every *parganah* and *chaklah*[2], and set up new *thanas*[3] between Daghachi and Suti.[4] In the meantime Diler Khan with 2500 Afghans and Daud Khan with a large number of troops joined him. In addition, he also received seventeen lacs of rupees from the Emperor. Now he planned to cross the Ganges 10 miles above Rajmahal and to encircle the Shujaits. After crossing the narrow stream on 15th January by a bridge of boats which had been brought by Daud Khan's son Sheikh Hamid, and there crossing the second stream on 17th January he reached Samdah.

At Samdah Shuja was waiting with a large army to give battle to Muazzam Khan. He planned to send Mohammad Sultan against Diler Khan and Daud Khan across the Mahananda river. But rapid movement of Muazzam Khan and his arrival at Samdah on 17th January, upset his plan and he had to recall his troops. Even then he found it difficult to fight the imperialists in the open, and so he decided to decentralise resistance all along with the Mahananda river under the leadership of Syed Taj and Khwajah Mishki.[5] But they failed to bar the passage of the imperialists and the latter

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1. A. N., pp. 531-32 ; T. S. f 131a ; E. F. I., X. p. 298.
2. *Chaklah* : A territorial sub-division.
3. *Thanas* : Military Stations.
4. A. N., pp. 532-34 ; T. S. ff. 134a-b.
5. A. N., pp. 534-37 ; Haqiri 380-84.

succeeded in crossing the Mahananda river in three days (1st February to 3rd February)[1].

Shuja was waiting for the rainy season. But Muazzam Khan was not prepared to give respite to the enemy. He crossed Samdah on an elephant on 4th February and next day he despatched Syed Salar Khan towards Malda to encircle Shuja and block his retreat towards south, because west and north were already blocked. Upon this Shuja ordered his nephew Prince Mohammad Sultan to go to Tanda from where he slipped off to his father's side.

The desertion was the result of Muazzam Khan's trick. He wrote a fictitious letter to the prince, a device often used by his master Aurangzeb. This letter forced Sultan Mohommad to rejoin the imperial side. Manucci writes that "Meanwhile Mir Jumlah employed a startagem. He prepared a letter to Sultan Mohammad in which he desired him to continue as he was doing until occasion arose to fulfil his promise to his father. As intended by Muazzam Khan, the letter fell into the hands of Shah Shuja, it shocked and frightened him. He forbade the Prince to enter the palace though Prince Mohammad Sultan tried hard to remove the suspicion from Shuja's mind, and ratified fresh oath to serve him faithfully". But he failed to secure Shuja's confidence who apprehended that Mohammad Sultan would betray him at a critical moment and would return to his father's camp. Thus, finding himself out of favour Prince Mohammad Sultan secretly opened negotiation with Islam Khan who was entrenched on the other side of Tanda. Meantime, Syed Alam returned from Dacca and the drums which were sounded in his honour, offended the prestige of the Prince who felt it humiliating to stay there any more.[2] Eventually in the evening of 8th February

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1 When Syed Taj and Khwajah Misl.ki went to Shuja and informed him about their failure, Shuja sa d, "Never have I been successful against Mir Jumlah even when the latter had a numericolly inferior force. What success have I won before, that now I may hope to drive him out of any country. Now the entire force of Aurangzeb is with him" (I aqir i, 388)

2. He angrily remarked : "From the time of Timur till now, drums have not been soun ed for anyone (except for the members of royal blood) ; my heart rages with fury ; let me go to my father ; better even if he slays me than cherish anger amongst such generals" (Haqiri, 407).

he took a boat on a pretext of fishing and in the darkness of night he slipped to the camp of Islam Khan at Daghachi.[1]

As soon as Muazzam Khan heard the news of prince's arrival at the imperial camp, he forthwith returned from the eastern bank of the Mahananda river to Samdah on 12th February and summoned the prince to his presence. On his arrival, Muazzam Khan welcomed the unfortunate prince by offering presents, ordering the drums to be beaten in his honour and also consoled him by promising that he will write to his father (Aurangzeb) requesting him to overlook his past conduct and he acted up to his words. When the Emperor learnt of the whole affair he expressed his pleasure and praised the faithfulness and loyalty of his commander-in-chief and commended his tact in bringing back the prince to the imperial camp. Orders were issued to send the prince to court escorted by Fidai Khan.[2] Muazzam Khan acted accordingly and on 29th February sent the prince to the capital.

Now Muazzam Khan planned to encircle Shuja from all sides and to block the latter's retreat to the south. He decided to force a passage across the Mahananda river, while Buland Akhtar and Syed Alam were guarding the right bank of the river. He came to know from the local *zamindars* that the river was fordable in its lower course near Baglaghat[3] which commanded the direct route of supply to Shuja's camp. He Muazzam Khan decided to cut it off

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1. A. N., pp. 542-43; Haqiri, 407-8 ; Tavernier, I, 361 ; A. S , II, p. 328 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., II, 196. On hearing the prince's desertion Shuja said, "A prince does not flee away, even if he is under a sharp sword ; this does not befit a prince ; if me I myself would have arranged for his going with stores, treasures, and materials ? I think that Sultan has fled because of fear of imprisonment at my hands; but have I not given my daughter to him, there is no one to help me. Even whom I benefit turns into my foe;.....how he deceives me". (Haqiri, 414-15)

2. A. N., pp. 544 ; 546 : A. S., III, p. 328 ; M. A , pp. 30, 33 ; Haqiri, 407-9 ; 416-23, 427-34 ; *Waqiat*, p. 139 Manucci, I, p. 337-38 ; Bernier, p. 83 ; Tavernier, I, 363 ; M. U. Eng. Tr., II, p. 196 ; Elliot & Dowson, VII, p. 251.

3. A. N., p. 544 ; T.S., f. 160b.

and he appointed Diler Khan who on 27th February 1660 at the head of 15000 soldiers, advanced towards Baglaghat. When the latter reached there, Shah Shuja's troops opened fire on him, but they were repulsed. Buland Akhtar and Syed Alam were witnessing the contest from the other side of the river, and the former reported to his father that Diler Khan after defeating his men had caputred the place. Hearing this sad news, Shuja ordered his men to keep a strict watch over Diler Khan's movements so that he might not cross the river and capture Samdah because it would mean the annihilation of his army and loss of his kingdom.[1]

Seeing Shuja's forces concentrated near Samdah, Muazzam Khan made a detour to the eastern bank of the river Mahananda. He crossed it on 29th February and proceeded towards Malda (2nd March) where Diler Khan was encamping while Buland Akhtar was guarding the other side of the river.[2] On 6th March Muazzam Khan reached Mahmudabad. He kept the enemy busy and ordered Daud Khan to find a passage to cross the Kalindi in the face of Shuja's entrenchment. While Shuja was prolonging the conflict till rainy season, the imperialists were keen to finish it before its advent. But Shuja was frustrating the attempts of the latter.[3] Meanwhile, Diler Khan with the help of a local chief discovered an obscure illguarded ford about four miles below Baghlaghat, and immediately sent information about it to the commander-in-chief (Muazzam Khan). On 5th April Muazzam Khan at the head of ten to twelve thousand troops started from Mahmudabad and picked up Diler Khan from Baglaghat and reached the ford at dawn. Shuja was unaware of the movements of "the great strategician" Muazzam Khan, and his men moved forward and positioned their guns against the imperialists, but they failed to check the enemy. Thus, Muazzam Khan and his men were able to ford the river in spite of opposition of Buland Akhtar and Syed Alam.[4] Buland Akhtar fled to Tanda and

1. A. N., pp. 545-7 ; Haqiri, 435-39.
2. A. N., pp. 547-48 ; Haqiri, 435-39.
3. A. N., p. 548 ; T. S. ff 160a-b ; *Waqiat*, p. 139.
4. A. N., pp. 548-51 ; F. A , ff 47a-b ; T. S., f. 161a.

Syed Alam marched to the outpost of Mirdapur to join his ill-stared master Shah Shuja who was facing Daud Khan on the opposite bank. Thus finding himself surrounded from three sides and being left with no other way to escape, except crossing the river, Shuja hurriedly called Mirza Jan Beg for consultation. He was advised to take to precipitate flight to avoid humiliation and capture. Accordingly, having set out for his camp after the dusk, he started for Tanda where his family was staying.[1] At the dawn of 6th April, he reached Tanda in a great hurry and without tarrying there started on his last journey with his family and a few followers.

Hearing that Shuja was on flight towards Dacca Muazzam Khan attempted to bar his path and seized some of the loaded boats the prince who narrowly escaped capture. He was hotly chased by of the enemy. At Tartipur, they captured two *ghurabs* loaded with treasure and at Sherpur and Hazarhati, Lodi Khan captured 30 boats of Shuja's flotilla. Thus, Shuja arrived at Dacca "bankrupt in fame and fortune". But Muazzam Khan with his famous generals like Diler Khan, Daud Khan, Rashid Khan and many others was speedily moving to capture him.[2] Thus, even Dacca could not provide him a haven of safety and so Shuja decided to cross into Arakan from where he intended to go to Persia via Arabia in the hope of getting every kind of aid from the Shia ruler against his Sunni brother Aurangzeb. He sent his messanger to the ruler of Arakan requesting him to provide him shelter. But the swift movement of Muazzam Khan who was determined not to allow a moment's rest to Shuja, left no other alternative for him except that of taking boat for Arakan,[3] without waiting for the reply of his letter. Consequently, on 6th May 1660 he bade farewell to his eastern capital where he had ruled nearly twenty springs and passed the golden days of his life and he sailed for Arakan.[4] When Muazzam Khan reached (on 9th May) the outskirts of Dacca, he found some war materials

1. A. N., p. 552 ; T.S , ff. 161a-62a ; Haqiri, 472.

2. A. N., pp. 554-55; Haqiri, 475-77.

3. Manucci I, p. 370 ; Tavernier, I, p. 367 ; Careri, p 229 ; Catrou, p. 272,

4. A. N,, p. 561 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 197 ; M. A , p. 18.

and stores which had been left there by the fugitives. They were sent to the Emperor. Thus, Muazzam Khan whom his master had assigned the task of Shuja's pursuit, very successfully completed it by driving out Shuja from Bengal for all time to come.[1]

On receipt of this happy news on 24th May the Emperor ordered festivities in celebration of the event. Latter on, on sunday 6th Zilqad, 1070 A.H./15th July 1660, the 44th lunar birthday the Emperor issued a *firman* appointing Muazzam Khan as governor of Bengal which had a different climate ....and was without administrative control. The appointment was made with a purpose as is evident from the following extract from the *firman:*

".....Praise be to God, that the expedition to Bengal has been successfully completed according to the Emperor's wish, through your exertion and management.....His Majesty has learnt that Bengal is without government and control, and that therefore a man capable of regulating the country should be appointed its viceroy. The fact of the absence of administration, carelessness and incapacity of the man ignorant of truth who was so many years in that kingdom, is not concealed (from His Majesty). In the circumstances how could the country be governed especially as disorder increased the misfortune and in every district, a lawless man raised his head in tumult.....[2] At the time of giving you leave for the uprooting of that luckless man (Shuja) there was a talk of entrusting the viceroyalty of Bengal to you and you had out of your devotion to me, said that if the viceroyalty of that place were entrusted to you, the men deputed with you would not co-operate with you and obey you and would imagine that your efforts to wrest the country (from Shuja) were due to your self interest. Therefore this matter had been kept in abeyance. Now that, through God's grace, the whole

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1. Mohammad Saleh Kambu writing in 1971 states that, "Upto this time none knows anything abaut Shuja's fate in Arakan. It is utterly unknown in what country he is and what he is doing or whether he has been sent to the realm of dead". (A S., III, p. 328). And later, Khwafi Khan writes; ".n Arakan all traces of Shuja disappeared, none (in India) gets any sign of him".

2. F. A., 48a-b.

of that Kingdom; which is one of the largest provinces of the protected empire and the residence of famous princes has come into the possession of the imperial government, none but you can govern it properly. Therefore, I graciously entrust the governorship of Bengal to you. Your character which is an evident proof of your peaceful nature, your love of cherishing the peasantry, your tact of dealing with the people and love of justice."[1]

On this occasion the high title of *Khan-e-Khanan* and *Sipahsalar* was conferred on Muazzam Khan and his *mansab* was raised to 7000 *zat* and 7000 *sawar*, out of which 5000 troopers were made '*doaspah*' and '*seh aspah*'[2]. All the *mahals* which were assigned to the former governors of Bengal as *jagir* picked and productive, were likewise given to him. In addition, the Emperor fixed one crore of dam as his pay and sent to him a gorgeous robe of honour, 10 Iraqi and Arab horses, each of which had been picked from amongst horses in the imperial stables Besides horses, two elephants one male and the other female were also given to him. He was told that if he found the *mahals* of his *jagir* to be unsatisfactory, he might ask for any other *parganah* which he would like to have in lieu thereof. Besides, he was given a jewelled waist-band and a dagger with a handle of jasper[3]. Aurangzeb asked Muazzam Khan to devotehimself to the happiness of the inhabitants, security of travellers and safety of the frontiers which were disturbed by lawlessmen and freebooters. He was directed to equip his artillery, and to arrange a *nawwara* which was an absolute necessity for punishing the lawless *zamindars* especially those of Assam and Magh.[4]

The illness of the Emperor Shahjahan and consequent race for power among his sons necessitated the absence of Shuja from his

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1. F. A., 49a.

2. A. N., p. 563; M. A., p. 32; M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 197. But according to Isardas Nagar only 3000 troopers were made '*do aspah*' and '*seh aspah*'. See F. A., 49a; *Do aspah* : A trooper with two horses ; *Seh aspah* : A trooper with three horses.

3. *Ibid.*

4. F. A., 50a; E. F. I., XI, p. 79.

province at frequent intervals. In the circumstances Bengal became a scene of anarchy and confusion. Its administration was on the brick of collapse. Taking advantage of such a situation the Koch Raja Pran Narayan[1] stopped payment of tribute. He not only declared himself independent but made a series of raids into Ghoraghat region. He plundered it and carried away a large number of prisoners. He then sent his *wazir* Bhavanath[2] with a large army with the object of conquering Ramrup, including Hajo and Gauhati.[3] Jaidhavaj, the Raja of Assam, advanced towards Kamrup. The Mughal *faujdar*[4] of Kamrup, Mir Lutfullah Sirazi finding himself exposed to attack from two sides and not hopeful of getting timely succour hurriedly boarded a boat and retired to Jahangir Nagar (Dacca).[5] Kamrup now became the apple of discord between the Koches and the Ahoms. The Ahoms attacked the Koches at Haju and Akrungkushi and at both the places the latter were defeated. Thus the Ahoms captured Kamrup and also *mauza*[6] Karibari which is only five stages from Jahangir Nagar.[7] They established a garrison at the village Hatsilah[8] near Karibari and from there they opened raids. They pulled down edifices, destroyed cultivation and ruined the entire kingdom.[9]

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1. In the *Alamgir Namah*, he is called 'Bhim Narain' (See A. N., p. 676). Blochmann, in his analysis of the '*Fathiya-e-Ibriya*,' calls this king Bhim Narayan, but he notes that some manuscripts have also Pem Narayan (Prem Narayan). There can be no doubt that the correct reading should be Pran Narayan. This name is mentioned in the Koch as well as in the Ahom chronicles.

2. It is Bholanath in *Alamgir Namah* (See A. N., p, 578).

3. A. N. pp. 676-78; R. S., p. 222/23 : M U. Eng. Tr. 11, p. 197.

4. *Faujdar* : The military commander of a sub-division of the province or the military governor of a district.

5. A. N. pp. 676-78: R. S., pp. 222-23.

6. *Mauza* : Village.

7. A. N., p. 678.

8. It is Mastisilah in *Alamgir Namah* (p. 679) and Tabsilah in *Riyaz-us-Salatin* (p. 223).

9. A. N., p. 679; R. S., p. 223.

It was the state of affairs in which Muazzam Khan Khan-e-Khanan, the newly appointed governor of Bengal was asked by the Emperor Aurangzeb to punish the daring raiders and restore peace and order. But before undertaking his campaign to Kuch Bihar and Assam, the Khan-e-Khanan made a number of administrative arrangements in Bengal. He continued Mukhils Khan as the governor of Akbarnagar (Rajmahal), Ehtisham Khan was placed incharge of Bengal administration at Jahangir-Nagar (Dacca) with Bhagwati Dass as his *diwan*, Mohammad Muqim was deputed to supervise *nawwara* (at Dacca) and Mir Ghazi was appointed paymaster and news-writer (*waqya nawis*).[1]

On the 1st November 1661, the Khan-e-Khanan started from Jahangir-Nagar, with ten to twelve thousand cavalry, a huge infantry and a powerful flotilla of war-boats.[2] Here, he showed his strategical talents in selecting the march-route through an obscure and neglected highway avoiding the two better known roads. The author of *Alamgir Namah* records that at the time three land routes lay to Kuch Bihar, the first was via Murang, the second via Doars and the third was via Ghoraghat, or Rangpur.[3] But before taking any hasty and risky decision the Khan-e-Khanan sent his men to ascertain which route would be the best. Then, he chose the Ghoraghat route through which he pushed on his force by land, sending out another force by the water on war-vessels, so that these two forces may afford cover to each other.[4]

On 13th December 1661, the imperial army reached the foot of *al*.[5] Disembarking there they commenced a difficult march through jungles. Reaching a place three stages from the capital, the Khan-e-Khanan heard the news of the Raja's flight to the Bhutan hills, and of his *wazir* Bhavanath seeking shelter in the dense forests of

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1. A. N., p. 679 ; R. S., p. 223.

2. A. N., p. 683 ; Besides navy, Muazzam Khan had 20,000 efficient cavalry and numerious infantry. (See R. S., p. 224). He employed many Europeans in his navy. (E. F. I, X, 193, XI., p. 70),

3. *Ibid*.

4. *Ibid*.

5. *Al* : Embankment.

Murang.[1] On the 19th December 1661, the Khan-e-Khanan reached the capital and occupied it without any opposition. Though the city was captured, the Khan-e-Khanan forbade the usual practice of plundering and ravagery of the conquered territory. He assured the people of protection of their honour and property. This politic and generous move of the Khan-e-Khanan created a place for him in the hearts of Kuch Bihar people including Bishan Narayan, the fugitive Raja's son. He came to the royal camp and was honoured with a *khilat*.[2]

Before his departure from the place, the Khan-e-Khanan made elaborate arrangements for the administration of the conquered territory. He set aside the administrative set up of the Raja and introduced there the Mughal system because now the country had become a part of the Mughal empire. Isfandiyar Beg, now entitled Khan, was appointed officiating *faujdar* of the region, with 400 cavalry and 1000 match-lockmen till the arrival of the permanent incumbent Askar Khan, Qazi Samu was appointed *diwan* and many other similar appointments were made. The Capital was renamed as *Alamgirnagar* after the honoured name of Alamgir Padshah. He also had the *Khutba* read and the coins struck in the name of the Emperor.[3]

After his signal success in Kuch Bihar, Muazzam Khan Khan-e-Khanan decided to march against the king of Assam, Jaidhvaj who had challenged the Mughal prestige and power by crossing the western boundary of Assam into the Mughal at Kamrup and plundering the neighbouring Mughal territories. On the 4th January 1662 the Khan-e-Khanan advanced towards the bank of the Brahmaputra, where he reached five days later. He ordered the army to march slowly along the bank of river, remaining in close contact with the fleet. In this way the progress was not more than 2 1/2 *kos* (5 miles) per day.[4] Diler Khan, his oldest general commanded the van, Mir

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1. A. N., pp. 693-94 ; R. S., pp. 224-25.

2 *Ibid* ; *A History of the Mughal North Eastern Frontiar Poliey* by S. N. Bhattacharyya, p 306

3. A. N., p. 694 ; R.S., p. 225.

4. A. N., pp 694-96 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 199.

Murtaza was the *darogha* of the artillery, while the fleet was incharge of Ibn Husain assisted by Jamal Khan, Munawwar Khan and others. When they reached at Rangamati, Rashid Khan who had been sent earlier with a detachment, joined them. Then the whole army advanced and halted 5 miles west of Jogighopa, 80 miles from Gauhati, on 17th January 1662. Describing the fort of Jogighopa, the author of *Fathiya-e-Ibriya* writes : "It is a large and high fort on Brahmputra. Near it the enemy had dug many holes for the horses to fall into, and pointed pieces of bamboo (panjis) had been stuck in the holes. Behind the holes at about half a shot's distance, on an even ground, they had made a ditch and behind this ditch, near the fort, another one three yards deep. The latter was also full of bamboos. This is how the Ahom fortify all their position. They make their forts of mud. The Brahmputra is in the south of the fort and in the east of the Monas." Even then, the Assamese failed to offer any stubborn resistance and they beat a hasty retreat to Srighat. The fort of Jogighopa and the fort of Panch Ratan were occupied by the Mughals.[1]

Leaving Ataullah as the *faujdar* of Jogigohopa, the Khan-e-Khanan continued his march and on the 4th February 1662 entered the environs of Srighat. The Ahom King attempted to check the further advance of the imperial army, but he was defeated[2] and fled across the Brahmputra to the fort of Kajli. After capturing Srighat, the Khan-e-Khanan moved 2 miles south and reoccupied Gauhati, the capital of the Mughal Kamrup and halted there for two days. Meantime, the imperialists moving along the south bank of Brahmputra, captured the fort of Pandu[3] which lay opposite to Srighat. From there, they advanced towards Kajli which lay 14 miles east of Pandu and occupied it. After giving the charge of the place to Hasan Beg, the *thanahdar*,[4] they returned and joined the main army at Gauhati.

Thus, Muazzam Khan Khan-e-Khanan succeeded in recovering the whole of Kamrup from the hands of the Ahoms and restored the

1. A. N., pp, 694-96 ; *Purani Assam Buranji*, p. 121.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Purani Assam Buranji*, p. 121.
4. *Thanahda* : Incharge of the '*thanah*'.

Mughal authority there. After this the Raja of Darrang offered submission to the Khan-e-Khanan. Leaving Mohammad Beg as the *faujdar* of Gauhati, the Khan-e-Khanan set out for Garhgaon, the Ahom capital.[1] Half way to Samdhara the whole army crossed the river Brahmputra and moved towards Simlagarh. In the way the Raja of Dimarua sent his nephew with tribute to attend upon the Khan-e-Khanan and to apologise for his absence on account of sickness.

Having suffered repeated defeats at the hands of the Khan-e-Khanan, the Ahom king (Jaidhvaj) gathered all his officers and soldiers at Samdhara, the key of his kingdom. He fully garrisoned the forts of Samdhara and Simlagarh (which lay opposite to Samdhara) to defend his dominion. On the 20th February 1662, the Khan-e-Khanan reached the vicinity of Simlagarh and pitched his camp on the bank of a *nalah*. After five days halt in which they made strenuous attempts, the imperialists eventually succeeded in reaching the fort-wall. On 25th February, they delivered their final thrust. The Assamese fled precipitately without taking their guns and other war materials, which fell into the hands of the victors. Next day, on the 26th February the victorious Khan-e-Khanan entered the fort of Simlagarh.[2] Hearing the news of the fall of Simlagarh, the Assamese at Samdhara lost heart and fled without offering any resistance. The Khan-e-Khanan occupied the fort of Samdhara and appointed Syed Mirza Shahzawari as the *thanahdar*. He was to be assisted by Syed Tatar and Raja Kishin Singh. From Samdhara he reached Kaliabar and there too, he strictly forbade plunder and the villagers brought supplies freely. After three days halt he resumed his march, leaving Syed Nasiruddin as the *faujdar* of Kaliabar. From there, the Mughal army had to move away from the bank on account of the hills skirting the river Brahmputra. This was a golden opportunity for the Assamese and they attempted to destroy the imperialists. But their attempt failed and they fled for life. The Khan-e-Khanan's men succeeded in capturing over 400 Assamese war-vessels with numerous guns, armaments and stores.

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1. A. N., pp. 704-28 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 200.
2. *Ibid* : M.U. Eng Tr., II, p. 200.

It was the most decisive battle in the whole campaign of Muazzam Khan. The Ahom navy had been captured in full and now he could easily reach the Ahom capital.[1]

With the defeat at Kaliabar, the Assamese lost courage and gave up the idea of meeting the Mughals in an open fight. Therefore, the Khan-e-Khanan reached Salagarh and captured the fortress without any opposition. Here, he received the overtures of peace from Jaidhvaj Singh, the Ahom Raja. But all of them were rejected on suspicion of their being tricks for causing delay and gaining time as well as for throwing him off his guard.

From Salagarh, the Khan-e-Khanan marched to Lakhuagarh arriving there on 9th March, 1662. Leaving Ibn Husain there, he started his triumphant march further passing Debargaon (reached on 13th March), Gajpur (on 15th March)and Trimuhani(on 16th March). Finally, on 6th Shaban, 1072 A. H./17th March 1662 he entered Garhgaon,[2] the capital of Assam and captured 82 elephants, about 3 lacs of specie in gold and silver, 675 big guns, more than 9100 matchlocks and small guns, a large quantity of gun powder and raw materials, 1000 war vessels and 173 store houses of rice, each containing 10 to 1000 maunds of rice. The *Khutba* was recited and the coins struck in the name of the Emperor.[3]

Hearing about this great victory of Muazzam Khan, Aurangzeb graciously issued a *firman* full of praises, awarding him a special *khilat*, the *tuman tugh* and reward of one crore *dam* (Rs. 2 1/2 lacs).[4] In fact, it was a unique success of Muazzam Khan Khan-e-Khanan. Never before "had it been possible for the keys of the genius of the Indian princes to unlock that bewitched land, and whenever previou-

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1. A.N., p. 711-15 ; Manucci, II, pp.98-99 ; *Assam Buranji* p. 20 ; *Purani Assam Buranji* p. 122.

2. A.N., pp, 719-28; M.U. Eng. Tr., II, p. 200 ; M.A., p. 40 ; *Purani Assam Buranji* pp. 123 24 ; *History of Assam*, p. 134.

3. *Fathiya-Ibriya*, p. 75 ; *Alamgir Namah* gives slightly different figures, e. g. 100 elephants, 208 battering guns etc. (See A. N., pp. 727-28.).

4. A. N., p. 740-1 ; M. A., p. 40 : M.U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 201.

sly an army had penetrated there it had been captured or slain at the hands of these rebels, but the Khan-e-Khanan by virtue of his skill and courage succeeded in occupying the distant and vast country fortified with so many strong forts and fortresses".

The rainy season was fast approaching. The Khan-e-Khanan at first intended to spend it at Lakhau but three day's continuous downpour indicated early commencement of the monsoon and it became impossible to transport the booty in time. Therefore, he resolved to encamp at Mathurapur, a village at the foot of hills, 7 miles south-east of Garhgaon and proposed to spend the rainy season there. Before leaving the Ahom capital of Garhgaon he made certain administrative arrangements. He gave the charge of Garhgaon to Mir Murtaza (with Raja Amar Singh and others) with instructions to despatch the captured cannon and booty to Jahangir Nagar. Syed Mohammad was appointed as *diwan*. He also established many outposts for the protection of the borders.[1]

Reaching Mathurapur, the Khan-e Khanan established many outposts around the region. He posted Mina Khan at Salpani, Ghazi Khan at Deopani and Jalal Khan to protect the banks of Dehing river.[2] Thus he set up a chain of fortified posts from Gauhati upwards, all along the Brahmputra.[3] When the rains set in, the rivers over-flowed their banks and the whole area became flooded. The Assamese who lay concealed and were waiting for the opportunity became active especially at night. As the Mughal outposts were isolated and the movement of land forces had become impossible, the Khan-e-Khanan had no other alternative than to wait patiently for the end of rainy season.

In the middle of the month the rains began to decrease, the flood subsided and the long-lost contaet with the fleet was now re-

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1. A. N; p. 736 ; *Fathiya-e-Ibriya*, pp. 75-86 ; R.S., p. 226 ; *History of Assam*, p. 135 ; *A History of the Mughal North Eastern Frontier Policy*, p. 333.

2. *Ibid.*

3. The whole Dakhinkul and portions of Uttarkul were subdued by the imperialists (A. N., p. 736).

etablished. By the end of *Rabi-ul-Awwal* 1073A.H./October 1662, the boats of provisions also arrived at the Mughal camp. The Khan-e-Khanan now resumed the offensive and decided to retaliate on his enemy ; he sent out detachments to all sides. They drove away the Assamese before them like sheep before the wolf. The Ahom Raja Jaidhavaj Singh with a few nobles again fled to the hills of Namrup and made overtures for peace. But the Khan-e-Khanan did not accede to his request and marched towards Namrup.

Meanwhile, the Khan-e-Khanan, fell seriously ill and his health began to decline fast. His soldiers were tired and their courage was waning. Some of them even contemplated to go away to Bengal should the Khan-e-Khanan decide to prolong his stay for extirpating the Raja. They were reluctant to wait any further in the pestilential climate of Namrup. When the Khan-e-Khanan learned of their intention he was much grieved. Meanwhile the Raja renewed his peace overtures and requested Diler Khan to mediate on his behalf. Finding himself in a critical situation and his men on the point of deserting him, the Khan-e-Khanan thought it discreet to accept peace with honour on the following terms.[1] :

(1) That the Ahom Raja and the Tipam Raja would each send a daughter to the imperial *harem*.

(2) That the Ahom Raja would deliver immediately a war indemnity of 20000 tolas of gold, 120000 tolas of silver (six times of gold), 20 elephants for the Emperor, 15 for the Khan-e-Khanan and 5 for Diler Khan.

(3) That the Raja would send 300,000 tolas of silver and 90 elephants within 12 months as the balance of indemnity.

(4) That the Raja would send six sons of the chief nobles as hostages, pending compliance with the above mentioned conditions.

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1. There is a controversy regard ing the exact terms of this treaty. *Fathiya-e-Ibriya* and *Alamgir Namah* only gives us details of the peace terms. It is corroborated by some of the Assame chronicles. Bernier and Manucci are, however, silent about the terms.

(5) That the Raja would send 20 elephants annually.

(6) That the Darrang in *uttarkul* bounded by Gauhati on the west and the Bharali river on the east and in *dakhinkul* Beltala and Damarua, were to be ceded to the Mughals.

(7) Finally, that the Raja would release all prisoners including the family of Baduli Pukhan,

The treaty was concluded and on the 10th Jamadi-us-Sani, 1073 A.H. 10th January, 1663 the Khan-e-Khanan ordered his men to return to Bengal. On Thursday, 22nd Jamadi-us-Sani 1073 A.H./the 22nd January 1663, he arrived at Lakhan in a *palanquin*. From Lakhau he went to Kaliabar by boat, and thence by *palanquin* reached Kajli and had a rest for few days. On 13th Rajab 1073 A.H./Wendnesday 11th February he left Kajli and arrived at Pandu opposite Gauhati. From there he sent Rashid Khan as the *faujdar* of Gauhati. At this time his condition became hopeless. Though a number of physicians were in attendance upon him none of them was able to give him any relief. So, he was compelled to give up his projected expedition to Kuch Bihar which the Raja had recovered. He deputed Askar Khan to reconquer it and he himself started for Khizrpur. His ailment worsened and before his boat could reach there, he breathed his last within 4 miles of Khizrpur on 2nd *Ramzan* 1073 *A. H.*/30th March 1663 (*Masnad Arae-e-Bahisht*).[1]

All his life Muazzam Khan had to contend with the enemies of the Emperor Aurangzeb in the eastern region and he passed his time in camps and finished his career as a general. He could never get an opportunity to extract himself from the difficult campaigns nor did the Emperor ever gave him an opportunity to display his talents as *wazir*. Though he was *wazir* yet he never returned to the capital to sit in the *diwan*. During his absence the work of *diwan-e-wizarat* was looked after by Rai Raghunath ; and yet his achievements were of no mean order. He was cast in the same mould as his master, the Emperor. He was thoroughly loyal to him and was

1. M. A., p. 44 ; A. N., p. 812 ; R. S., p. 226.

ever ready to sacrifice everything in the service of the Emperor. Unlike other officers of that time, he was never charged or suspected of making money by foul means and in this respect his character was spotless. True, he had played foul with Qutb Shah but he did it to preserve his ownself. And this is the only blot on his otherwise spotless character. There is no doubt that he was an excellent general and a successful administrator.

3

Jafar Khan

Jafar Khan was the son of Mir Bakhshi Sadiq Khan[1] and the grandson of Aqa Tahir *Wasli* from his father-side and Itmad-ud-daulah from his mother-side. Nothing is known about his date of birth and early life except that he was related to the royal family. From his infancy he was a special object of royal favours and was liked for his devotion and faithful service. When he attained the age of maturity he was married to Farzana Begum (Mumtaz's sister) commonly known Bibi Jiu, one of the daughters of Yamin-ud-daulah Asaf Khan. This matrimonial relationship with the royal family proved very beneficial to him and he came to be regarded as a prince of blue blood.

He constantly enjoyed favour of the Emperor Shahjahan, who raised his status and position by paying frequent visits to his house. When Jafar Khan's father (Sadiq Khan, the *mir bakhshi*) died on the 9th Rabi-us-sani 1040 A. H./ 7th October 1630,[2] the Emperor sent prince Aurangzeb to condole with him. After this, when he was brought into royal audience he received an increment of 1000 *zat*/ 500 *sawar* in his *mansab* which was now raised to 4000 *zat*/2000 *sawar*.[3] In the 7th regnal year, Shahjahan honoured Jafar Khan by visiting his house. In the 10th regnal year he was promoted to the rank of 5000 *zat*/ 3000 *sawar*.[4] After this, for a while, he was

1. He was the son of Aqa Tahir (whose poetical name was *Wasli*) a grandson of Mohammad Sharif Haji, and nephew and son-in-law of Itmad-ul-daulah Tehrani. He held a high rank in the time of Akbar, Jahangir and early years of Shahjahan, and died on the 9th Rabi-us-Sani 1040 A. H./7th October 1630. (M. U., II, pp. 729-31 , O. B. D., p. 188).

2. M. U., II, pp. 729-31.

3. M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 722.

4. *Ibid.*

under a cloud of suspicion but soon after he became the recipient of boundless favours. In the 19th year he was appointed governor of the Punjab. At the end of 20th regnal year he was appointed *mir bakhshi* in succession to Khalil Ullah Khan. When Makramat Khan, the governor of Shahjahanabad (Delhi) died in 23rd regnal year, Jafar Khan was given the governorship of that place and his *mansab* was raised to 5000 *zat*/5000 *sawar* with 1000 *do aspah* and *seh aspah*.[1] But within a year he was transferred to the *subahdari* of Thatta (Sindh) in succession to Saeed Khan Khan Bahadur Zafar Jung.[2]

When Shahjahan fell ill on 7th Zilhijj 1067 A. H./6th September 1658, his eldest and favourite son Dara Shikoh who was present at the court assumed the entire control of administration.[3] Being jealous of Muazzam Khan who was a close friend and favourite of Prince Aurangzeb, he could ill-afford to see him occupying a high post of *wazir*. Therefore, towards the end of September 1657 he dismissed Muazzam Khan,[4] and summoned Jafar Khan and appointed him *wazir*. On this occasion he was given an ornamented inkpot.[5]

After his first coronation Aurangzeb summoned Muazzam Khan from Daultabad to appoint him his *wazir* and councillor, and Jafar Khan was transferred to Malwa[6] as *subahdar*. But he remained in the good books of the new Emperor who increased his rank by 1000 *sawar*, *do aspah* and *seh aspah*. Thus he now became a *mansabdar* of 6000 *zat*/6000 *sawar* of which 4000 *sawar* were *do aspah* and *seh aspah*. He was also given a special robe (*khilat khas*), a female elephant, an ornamented dagger, a special sword and two fleet horses of which one was covered with ornamented saddle.[7] He held the

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1. A. S., III, p. 104 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 722.
2. A. S., III, p. 120.
3. M. L., II p. 4.
4. A. S., III, p. 265.
5. A. S., III, p. 281 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., p. 722 ; O. B. D., p. 188.
6. According to Khwafi Khan, Jafar Khan continued to enjoy the privilege of *wazir* and *subahdar* both. But this seems to be impaobable because in the subsequent pages the historian contradicts his own statement and says that after the death of Fazil Khan Jafar Khan was appointed as *wazir*.
7. A. N., p. 162 ; M. L., II, : p. 41 M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 722.

governorship of Malwa upto the 6th regnal year of the Emperor Aurangzeb. During his tenure, he tried to increase the revenue of the province and establish peace and order there. He also devoted his attention to the prosperity of *raiyat* who were suffering from the exploitations of the local *zamindars* ever since the later years of Shahjahan's reign.

In Jamadi I 1070 A. H./January 1660 Amir-ul-umara Shayista Khan was sent to the Deccan to put down Shivaji and to recover his strong fortresses which he had captured and which served as places of his abode and security.[1] The Amir-ul-umara after punishing the Maratha rebels, captured Puna, Supa and Chakna ; then he established outposts in these places to protect the life and property of the inhabitants of the Mughal terrirtory from the raids of the Marathas. He renamed Chakna, as Islamabad. When he arrived at Islamabad (Chakna) he called Jafar Khan from Malwa to assist him in the prosecution of the rest of the campaign.[2]

When Fazil Khan,[3] who had been appointed *wazir* on the 11th Zilqad 1073 A. H./7th June 1663,[4] died in Kashmir on the 27th Zilqad/23rd June only 17 days after holding the post,[5] the Emperor expressed his grief at the unhappy event and presented the mourning robe to the deceased's nephew Burhanuddin who had recently come from Persia. Jafar Khan was now summoned from Malwa to be

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1. M. L., II, p. 122.
2. *Ibid*.
3. He was born about 1593 A. D. in Persia. In the 7th regnal year of Shahjahan he migrated to India and attached himself to Nawab Asaf Khan (Nur Jahan's brother). He spent his days in his company and on the latters death, in the 15th Julus (R. Y. of Shahjahan) he entered the royal service and received the rank of 500 *zat*/50 *sawar*. In the 23rd *Julus-e-Shahjehani*, he got the title of Fazil Khan and in the 28th year received the rank of *Seh hazari* (3000). Aurangzeb after his succession to the throne promoted him to the rank of 4000 *zat*/ 2000 *sawar* and entrusted to him the duty of drafting the orders connected with the *diwan-e-kul* during the absence of the *wazir*. At the age of seventy he was appointed as the *wazir*, on 11th Zilqad 1073 A. H./7th June, 1663
4. M. A., p. 46.
5. *Ibid*., p. 47 ; A. S. III. p. 388 ; M. U. Eng. Tr., I. p. 552.

installed as *wazir*, and Najabat Khan was appointed to succeed him.[1] After enjoying the scenery of the beautiful valley of Kashmir the Emperor started for Lahore on 22nd Moharrum 1073 A. H./16th August 1663. He arrived there on Tuesday, the 7th Rabi I/29th September. On Monday, the 11th Rabi II/2nd November theEmperor was weighed on the occasion of his 46th solar birthday and a few fresh appointments were made on this auspicious occasion. Aqil Khan who was living in retirement at Lahore was reappointed a '*dohazari*' (of 2000)*mansabdar*. Tarbiyat Khan was sent as an envoy to Persia. He carried with him the reply to Shah Abbas's letter with costly gifts worth seven lacs of rupees. Then on the 18th Rabi II/9th November the Emperor started for Delhi. When he arrived at Panipat, Jafar Khan had his audience on 29th Rabi II/20th November, 1663. Here he was honoured with the insignia of *wizarat* and was presented a jewelled inkpot.[2]

The appointment of Jafar Khan to the post of the *wazir* appears to have been an act of concession to an elder peer. His only qualifications were geniality of temperament, righteousness and affable manners. As *wazir* he was so modest that he addressed everybody as 'sir', and was incapable of displaying anger ; nor did he like to listen coarse language in any form.[3] He was very fastidious for procedure and he followed it very carefully. He considered it his primary duty to draft the *firmans* and urgent letters. Then he read the papers of the *tan* department, applications (*arzi*) and orders (*parwanahs*). Next he gave his attention to the papers of *khalsa* department, or any *naqdi* or abstract memo etc. which were submitted to him. After disposing of these papers, he applied himself to other matters.

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1. M. A., p. 47 ; M. L., II, p. 176.

2. M. L., II, p. 177 ; M. A., p. 47 ; *Waqai Alamgiri*, p. 43 ; I donot know on what basis Jadunath Sarkar gives the date of appointment as 30th December 1666 which is incorrect. See, *History of Aurangzeb*, III, p. 65.

3. M. U., Eng. Tr. II, p. 723 ; Manucci, II. p. 156 ; Adding further Manueci says : "On occasion when his horse stopped all of a sudden, he dismounted and took a seat in his palanquine, cloaking the feeling that caused this action by protesting that it was very hot".

When Shivaji on the advice of Mirza Raja Jai Singh started from his country to visit the Mughal court, the Emperor sent an order drafted by *Umdat-ul-mulk* Jafar Khan on the 10th Shawwal 1076 A. H./9th regnal year (5th April 1666) granting him royal favours.[1] On Saturday, 18th Zilqad 1076 A. H./12th May 1666 A. D., the Emperor was weighed on the occasion of his 50th lunar birthday. It was on this occasion that the *Umdat-ul-mulk* introduced Shivaji and his son Sambha into the royal audience. Shivaji presented 1500 *asharfis* as *nazar*[2] and 6000 rupees as *nisar*[3] to the Emperor.[4] In lieu thereof the Emperor overlooking his offences, wanted to confer special favours on him and allow him to return to the Deccan. But Shivaji unfamiliar as he was with the royal etiquette retired to a corner and began to give vent to his dissatisfaction to Kunwar Ram Singh.[5] Upon this Raja Jaswant Singh very respectfully addressing the Emperor said, "He (Shivaji) is only a *bhumia* (land-holder) and yet he has given expression to such a violent and discourteous conduct. Your Majesty has overlooked it. Verily it is your Majesty's to do as pleaseth Your Majesty, though he should have been punished,"[6] but the *Umdat-ul-mulk* Jafar Khan being a kind and amiable person was favourably disposed towards Shivaji. He laid his (Shivaji's) petition before the Emperor, whereupon his offences were pardoned and his life was spared.[7] While Shivaji was at Agra Nawab Jafar Khan continued to be friendly to him and assured him and his Maratha friends of royal favours.[8]

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1. *Rajasthani letters*, quoted in Shivaji's visit to Agra Ed. by Jadunath Sarkar and Dr. Raghubir Sinh, p. 22.

2. *Nazar* : Present made to a superior'.

3. *Nisar* : Literally, sacraifice ; 'money waved round the head of the Emperor and then scattered among the people to ensure Gods' blessings for his health or victory'.

4. M. A., p. 55.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Rajasthani letter, No.* 17.

7. *Rajasthani letter. No.* 18.

8. Parkaldas in a letter to Kalyandas dated Tuesday 29th May, 1666 writes : "I hear that Shivaji paid some money to Jafar Khan to win his support, and elsewhere too he has sent more or less" *Rajasthani letter* No. 121.

The Nawab had a soft corner for the Europeans also. When the English factors approached him for a *hasb-ul-hukm*,[1] granting them duty free import and export of articles at Surat-port, the Nawab pleaded their case. It was on his recommendation that the Emperor granted the desired *hasb-ul-hukm* to them.[2] A letter from Surat to Madras, dated 19th May 1664, gives full details of the concession given to them, "The king has granted to all customs free for one whole year for all that shall be either exported ; and since we have received a letter from Gaffere Kaune (Jafar Khan), the king's *diwan*, which is called *husb-ul-hukm* or the king's special command, that acquaints us the king received our letter and petition of the accompt of the fight, read it, with so great content, and so much satisfaction that he had those in his country that faced his enemy, that there upon he gave to all favour exprest of a yeares custome graits, and for our further encouragement, from the expiration of the yeare the half our customes for ever and are yet in expectation of greater honours."[3]

On the expiry of the period of aforesaid concession, the British factors renewed their request for its continuance. As before, they approached Jafar Khan who promised his full support.[4] Now their case was that as the duty on the Dutch goods had been reduced from 3 1/2 $^{0}/_{0}$ to 2 $^{0}/_{0}$, the same privilege should be extended to them. Their application with favourable remarks had been forwarded to the *Wazir* by the governor of Surat, Ghiyasuddin Khan.[5] Jafar Khan placed the facts before the Emperor who issued a *firman* on July 25, 1667 that in future the duty should be lowered from 3 1/2% 2 % both on imports and exports, that no transit duty be levied on the English goods throughout the empire and that in the event of

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1. *Hasb-ul-hukm* : Literally, 'according to order'. These words forming the initial formula of a document issued by an officer of State on the Royal authority, and thence applied as the title of such document.

2. E. F. I. (1661-1664), pp. 312-15

3. *Ibid*.

4. E. F. I. (1665-1667), p. 272

5. *Ibid*., p. 274.

robbery being committed every effort should be made to recover the lost property which should be duly restored to the owners.[1] This reduced duty on British goods was applicable not only at the port of Surat, it was to be the same in Bengal, Agra and other places also. In addition, freedom from transit duty on goods carried to Surat *via* Burhanpur and Ahmedabad was also granted to the English factors.

Regarding Jafar Khan's relation with the French factors not much material is available to reconstruct the story. Yet there is a reference in East India Factory Records about his kind attitude towards them. In July 1666, two Frenchmen arrived at the court with a letter from the King of France to the Mughal Emperor.[2] The object of the letter was "to procure a grant so that his merchants may be admitted to live peaceably and settle factories of trade in his country". The two Frenchmen went to *Umdat-ul-mulk* Jafar Khan to be introduced into the Emperor's audience. But they "had neither the dignity nor countenance". The *Wazir* asked them to show the presents which they had brought, because no letter, according to the royal etiquette could be put before the Emperor without some gifts. Upon this the Frenchmen told Jafar Khan that a duly accredited representative of the country would shortly be arriving with requisite gifts and presents for the Emperor. But Jafar Khan refused to comply with their request insisting that they could not be introduced into the royal audience without presents. He asked them to wait till the arrival of their ambassador. Not being in a position to stay any longer at the capital the Frenchmen left for Surat.[3] On their way they were plundered by bandits, who reduced them to a miserable plight and one of them named Beber was even wounded. They again returned to Agra and presented themselves before the *wazir* seeking his help in getting an audience with the Emperor. *Wazir* Jafar Khan was touched with their diplorable condition. He not only consoled them but also pleaded their cause with the Emperor. The latter gran-

1. E.F.I. (1665-1667), p. 274.
2. *Ibid*, p. 158.
3. *Ibid*.

ted them a *hasb-ul-hukm* whereby they were to be given the same commercial concessions as had been accorded to the English. They were allowed to establish a factory at Surat and in return to pay 3 percent as custom duty on the imported goods. The French factors obtained these concessions only after they had fully assured the *wazir* that they would present goods of foreign-make worth Rs. 3000 to the Emperor and worth Rs. 1000 to him and to other nobles also.[1]

Thus, it is clear that the *wazir* was a link between the Emperor and the foreign merchants, that all commercial transactions were conducted through him, and that it was not so easy for either the English or the Dutch or the French to by-pass him.

When Abdullah Khan, the exiled king of Kashgar, was coming to the Mughal court Jafar Khan as the first minister went out on his master's behalf to receive him on Sunday 11th Shawwal 1078 A. H./15th March 1668.[2] Mounted on his horse he shook hands with the royal guest and escorted him upto the audience hall. On the 25th Shawwal/29th March, when the Emperor had descended from the throne and was standing near the fountain, *Umdat-ul-mulk* presented the Khan in the audience chamber. There was not a yard's distance between them. The Khan saluted the Emperor and then he stood in front of the Emperor near the fountain. The Emperor presenting him the '*tuighun falcon*' ordered *Umdat-ul-mulk* Jafar Khan to entertain the royal guest with the elephant combat and to sit with him there.[3]

During his six and a half year of *wizarat*, Jafar Khan never led any military campaign but always remained at the court. He performed his official duties and participated in the social life there. On Friday 17th Safar 1079 A.H./17th July 1668, Mohammad Azam was betrothed[4] to Jahanzeb Banu Begum, the daughter of Dara Shikoh, at the residence of Jahan Ara Begum known as Begum Sahiba. On

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1. E.F.I. (1665-67), p. 281.
2. M. A., p. 71 ; Manucci, II, p. 190.
3. *Ibid.*
4. The marriage was celebrated later on Monday the 27th Rajab 1078 A. H./21st December 1668.

this occasion Jafar Khan and other nobles presented to her 16000 rupees as the nupitial offering. A few months later on the 2nd Shawwal 1079 A. H./22nd February 1669 on the occasion of coronation day celebrations the Emperor rewarded *Umdat-ul-mulk* Jafar Khan, his son Namdar Khan and many other nobles with robes, horses and elephants.[1] Again, the 53rd lunar birthday of the Emperor which fell on Friday, the 18th Zilqad 1079 A. H./9th April 1669, was observed with usual pomp and festivities. His Majesty sat on the throne but no weighing ceremony took place as the practice had been stopped from the 11th regnal year. Singers and musicians remained excluded from the court. Prince Mohammad Azam was given a robe and a shield with jewelled knob and Mohammad Akbar a robe. *Umdat-ul-mulk* Jafar Khan and other courtiers were also rewarded with robes. Finally, on the day following the Id (2nd Shawwal 1080 A. .H, 13th February 1670) the *Umdat-ul-mulk* was granted an increment of 1000 troopers and 1 crore of *dams* as reward.[2]

Perhaps to ward off the infirmity of old age the *wazir* began to drink heavily. Very often the Emperor warned him saying that the habit was harmful for his health, nor was it becoming for the *wazir* in the empire of the faithful who was under a sacred obligation to set an example to the people. To this Jafar Khan would reply that, "he was an old man, without strength in his hand or firmness in his feet, had little sight in his eyes, and was very poor. By drinking wine he got the sight for seeing, power of wieldeing the pen in the service of His Majesty, felt strength in his feet to run to court when His Majesty called him, and could imagine to have become rich."[3] He further added that "wine could make the poor rich, the blind to see, the fragile robust and the cripple stout".[4] Manucci says that Emperor Aurangzeb smiled at the fulminations of his grand *wazir* and that Jafar Khan continued

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1. M. A., p. 74.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
3. Manucci, II., p. 157.
4. *Ibid.*

his old habit of drinking and so his health began to decline day by day and he fell ill. During his illness the emperor visited his house to comfort him. Counting his last days on bed, he died on Friday, the 25th Zilhijj 1080 A.H./6th May 1670.[1]

Aurangzeb was deeply grieved at the death of his devoted *wazir* and he visited the deceased minister's house to condole with his relations. He ordered that for three days 120 dishes of food should be sent to the bereaved family. Prince Mohammad Azam and Prince Mohammad Akbar were ordered to go to the houses of his sons Namdar Khan and Kamgar Khan to express their sorrow and sympathy. They were also asked to console their mother Farzana Begum. Special robes were sent to each of his sons and a *Tora*[2] for the widow. Subsequently, Prince Mohammad Akbar brought out the two brothers out of their mourning and escorted them to the Emperor who honoured them with jewelled daggers having pearl *ilaqa* (lace-work) and many other favours. Mourning robes were also sent to *Bakhshi-ul-mulk* Asad Khan and other relatives.[3]

Umdat-ul-mulk Jafar Khan was distinguished for his generosity and right mindedness. One day *mir bakhshi* Ruhullah Khan whose rank was inferior to that of the *wazir*, while presenting a petition to the emperor advanced too near to the throne and almost usurped the place meant for the *wazir*.[4] The emperor did not notice it but the *wazir* did. Next day, when Jafar Khan appeared at the court, he moved his one foot farther than was warranted by the regulations. Taking note of it, the Emperor remarked that "it appears that you are ignorant of rules and regulations. Have you not gone beyond the place assigned to you?" Jafar Khan soberly replied, "the *wazir* occupies the first place in the court and therefore in order to exhibit the difference between himself and *mir*

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1. M. A., p. 103 ; M. L., II, p. 234 ; Manucci, I. p. 193n ; M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 723 ; *Waqai Alamgiri*, p. 44 ; O. B. C., p. 188.

2 *Tora* : A bag containing a thousand rupees.

3 M. A. p. 103 ; M. L., II, p. 234 ; Manucci, I, p. 193n ; M. U., Eng. Tr., II, p. 723 ; *Waqai Alamgiri*, p. 44 , O. B. D., p. 188.

4. Manucci, II, p. 443.

bakhshi, I was compelled to move a step forward". Now the Emperor realised it, but instead of reproving the *mir bakhshi* he offered apology to his erudite *wazir* saying that it would not recur again.[1] In fact, he enjoyed immense respect in the court. The Emperor often deputed him to receive foreign princes and ambassadors on his behalf. For this assignment, his mature age and long experience, his good manners and mastery of Persian language eminently fitted him. In his character were united the graciousness of heart and nobility of behaviour. The famous poet Chandra Bhan Brahman in his '*Munshaat*' styles Jafar Khan as Plato III, and certainly he was a man of innumerable qualities of head and heart. But his political record or administrative skill did not equal the respect and honour he enjoyed. No measure of reform, no salutary regulations, no record of his keen-ness for improvement of the condition of the people stand to his credit. Verily he was a powerless *wazir* of a powerful emperor.

1. Manucci, II, p. 444.

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Asad Khan

Nawab Asad Khan[1] entitled Asaf-ud-daulah Jumdat-ul-mulk, the last and the most favourite *wazir* of Emperor Aurangzeb, who adorned the high office for more than three decades descended from an illustrious family of Turkomans. His original name was Mohammad Ibrahim and he was the son of Zulfiqar Khan Qaramanlu[2] and from his mother side he was the grandson of Sadiq Khan *mir bakhshi'*.[3] It is difficult to say exactly in what circumstances or when his father and grandfather left their home in search of livelihood and came to Persia, which in the heyday of its glory, offered refuge to tried adventurers and fortune hunters. But it was sheer luck which brought his grand-father Zulfiqar Khan to the Persian court, where he was received with due honour by Shah Abbas I, who appointed him to the post of *Belgar begi* of Shirwan.[4] But subsequently when on some suspicion Zulfiqar Khan was executed in 1600-1601, evil stars began to haunt his family. Like Itmad ud-daulah, his son surnamed *Khanlar*[5] migrated to India towards the end of Jahangir's reign. At this time the Mughal court was dominated by nobles of Persian extraction and so it did not prove difficult for *Khanlar* to win the esteem favour of the emperor. Jahangir conferred upon

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1. It was the title given by Shahjahan in the 27th year of his reign. Manucci, II, p. 21.
2. M. U., I, p. 310 ; Eng. Tr., I, p. 270 ; O. B. D., pp. 79-80.
3. *Ibid.*
4. M. U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 270.
5. Asad Khan's father. For his life, see M. U., II, p. 85.

him the title of 'Zulfiqar Khan'[1] and thanks to the kindness of Shahjahan, he was married to the daughter of Sadiq Khan brother-in-law of Yamin-ud-daulah Asaf Khan.[2] His rank was raised to 3000 *zat*/3000 *sawar*. His relationship with the ruling house fully ensured and safeguarded not only his interests but also those of his family. Towards the end of Shahjahan's reign, being struck with paralysis, he retired from public life and settled at Patna to pass his remaining days away from the hustle and bustle of the Mughal court and the capital. He lingered in his bed till 1659.,[3] and when at length death closed his eyes he had the great satisfaction that his eldest son Mohammad Ibrahim entitled Asad Khan had the honour of holding the post of second *bakhshi* in the Mughal army.[4]

Not much is known about the early life of Asad Khan. He was born in 1035 A.H./1625 A.D. at a time when dark clouds were gathering on the political horizon of the Mughal empire. These were the years of unprecedented crisis in the court politics but by the time he attained his youth, things had settled down to normalcy and a new era had begun with the accession of Emperor Shahjahan. In the absence of any recorded evidence it may be presumed that he must have received lessons in all those subjects which formed a part of the contemporary curriculum. As a result of his early education and careful upbringing he, in his later life was able to develop his subtle personality. Shah Nawaz Khan, the author of '*Maasir-ul-Umara*' records that "from his early years thanks to his personal beauty and external accomplishments he was conspicuous amongst his contemporaries".[5] No wonder, he became a favourite of Emperor Shahjahan who married him to a daughter of his father-in-law Asaf Khan, the *wakil*. In 1654 he received the title of Asad Khan[6]

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1. *Tuzuk*, Rogers, I, p. 275 ; O. B. D., p. 80.

2. He was the son of Itmad-ud-daulah, brother of Empress Nur Jahan and brother-in-law of Emperor Jahangir.

3. M. A., p. 27 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., I. p. 270 ; O. B. D. p. 80.

4. *Ibid*.

5. M. U. (Persian Text), I, p. 311.

6. Manucci, II, p. 21.

and was appointed to the post of *Akhtah begi* (Master of horse) and soon afterwards he was elevated to the position of second *bakhshi* an office which he held upto the 13th year of Aurangzeb's reign.[1]

It is related that he was a great favourite of Emperor Aurangzeb also. On 23rd May 1661 along with Saif Khan and Multafat Khan he moved to the outskirts of the city of Delhi to accord welcome to the Persian envoy Budaq Beg. He had the honour of conducting the royal guest to the emperor's presence.[2] Having served for long as a second *bakhshi*, in the 5th year of the Emperor's reign he was raised to the rank of 4000 *zat* 2000 *sawar* (1662-63).[3] But he was over shadowed by the dynamic and domineering personalities of the two prominent nobles Muazzam Khan and Jafar Khan. Thus he found no opportunity to play any significant role in contemporary politics, especially between 1662 and 1668. On Sunday, 11th Shawwal 1078 A.H./15th March 1668 A. D., he accompanied Umdat-ul-mulk Jafar Khan to receive Abdullah Khan, the exiled king of Kashghar.[4] On this occasion, he had the privilege of escorting the royal guest on horseback upto the doors of the audience hall. A little later, in a similar way, he received Husain Pasha, the Ex-governor of Basra. This time among those who accompanied him were *Sadr-us-suddur* Abid Khan, *Mir Turuk* Ekkataz Khan and *Bakhshi-ul-mulk* Danishmand Khan.[5] Perhaps, because of his excellent knowledge of political etiquette two riding horses of swift speed were presented to him.[6] And on 2nd Zilhijj 1080 A.H./13th April 1670,

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1. Manucci writes that Aurangzeb after his accession to the throne wrote to his father asking for a gift of jewels, but Shahjahan (in place of that) sent him a loyal Acet Khan (Asad Khan) a person whom he strongly recommended, declaring that he might be more safely trusted than any other living being". (*Ibid*).

2. M. A. p. 35, M.U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 270.

3. Dr. Satish Chandra's date is wrong by a year or so (Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, p. 1) M. U. clearly states that in the 5th year of Emperor Aurangzeb's reign, his rank was raised to 4000 2000. See M. U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 270.

4. M. A., p. 71.

5. *Ibid*, p. 86.

6. *Ibid*, p. 97.

along with Prince Mohammad Akbar and Bahramand Khan, he went out to receive Nawab Bai who had been summoned from Delhi. She was escorted to the imperial *harem*.[1] The same year occurred the death of *Umdat-ul-mulk* Jafar Khan ; but for a while the Emperor was reluctant to nominate his successor. He only promoted Asad Khan from the post of the second *bakhshi* to that of *naib wazir*.[2] On this occasion he received as gift a jewe led dagger and two quids of betel leaves besides other presents. Further, he was attached to Prince Muazzam as his *risalahdar* and the astronomer Diyanat Khan was appointed as his *sawar*. When Lashkar Khan died (February 1671), he was nominated as *mir bakhshi* also.[3] He held the two posts till 1673. Evidently the heavy responsibility of civil and military duties proved too heavy for a single officer. Add to this was the imperative necessity of reorganising the army for meeting the Maratha menace. In these circumstances, Asad Khan resigned the post of *naib wazir*. Upon this, the Emperor ordered Amanat Khan, the *diwan-e-khalsa* and Kifayat Khan, the *diwan-e-tan* to transact the business of the *diwan-e-wizarat* jointly and to affix their seals on state papers just below that of the *diwan e-ashraf*.[4]

In the South, the affairs were moving to a crisis because of the rapid rise of the Marathas to power under the leadership of Shivaji, and so the resources of the empire had to be diverted towards that front. On the north western frontier also, the situation was going out of control because of the tribal unrest. The failure of the Balkh campaign and the loss of Qandahar had adversely affected the imperial prestige in that region. The relaxation of military pressure there emboldened the refractory elements and they raised their heads. The most troublesome among them were the Yusuf Zais. Bhagu assumed their leadership and crowned Mohammad Shah as ruler.[5] He gave a religious colour to his rebellion by securing support of Mulla Cha-

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1 M. A., p. 102.

2. *Akhbarat*, 25th Zilhijja, 13th Julus ; (R. Y.) ; M. L. II, p. 235 ; M. A., p. 103.

3. M. A., p. 108.

4. *Ibid*, p. 125 26 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., I, p 271.

5. A. N., p. 1039-57 ; M. A. p. 61.

lak, who was held in much esteem by the Afghans. A large number of his fellow tribesmen rallied to his standard and crossed the Indus in 1667 and invaded Pakhli. They seized the fort of Chachal and other Mughal outposts and began to plunder the imperial territory near Attock and Nilab. Aurangzeb decided to open the offensive against the trouble makers and wanted to crush them. Accordingly he ordered Kamil Khan, the *faujdar* of Attock to collect all the Mughal officers and troops and march towards the tribal area. Likewise Amir Khan, the *subahdar* of Kabul was directed to send Shamshir Khan to the disturbed area. Amin Khan was sent with a large army from Delhi to assist the other commanders.[1]

Reinforced by Abdul Rahim Khan's troops which arrived under Murad Quli from Peshawar, Amin Khan marched towards ferry of Harum in October to cross the Indus there and enter the Yusuf Zai country. But before he could do it, the Yusuf Zais advanced further, crossed the river and delivered an attack upon the imperialists. After a bloody and fierce struggle the rebels were defeated. Amin Khan now entered the Yusuf Zais country and drove away the enemy from the territory east of river Indus. Since he did not have sufficient number of men and material, he prepared to wait for Shamshir Khan. And no sooner did the latter arrive there, Kamil Khan and the other imperial generals resumed the campaign. They attacked the Yusuf Zais in their own land, defeated and plundered them and ravaged and devastated their country. After presenting a united front to the imperialists, the Yusuf Zais withdrew to the hills. But soon the conflagration spread to the other tribes also. The Akur Zais and Malizais of Sawad and Tira flocked to the assistance of Yusuf Zais. They assembled at Mansur and launched a vigorous attack upon the imperial soldiers but they were defeated and dispersed.

Mohammad Amin Khan who had been sent from Delhi to assist the other two generals, arrived at the scene of action in August 1667. He crossed the Kabul river at Nari and took over the supreme command from Shamshir Khan. He tactfully

1. A. N., p. 1039-57; M. A , p. 61.

handled the situation, suppressed the Afghan rising and after establishing peace he returned to the court in response to imperial summons. He left the place in the hands of Shamshir Khan with instructions to keep the tribes in check. Thus for the next five years, i. e. till 1672 no tribal rising took place.

During this interval the tribal leaders collected their men and munition and revived their activities in 1672 on the pretext of provocation caused to them by the indiscreet behaviour of the *faujdar* of Jalalabad. The Afridis rose into rebellion under their chieftain Akmal Khan. The latter proclaimed himself king, struck coins in his name and declared war against the Mughals. The news of the Afridi rising startled Mohammad Amin Khan the viceroy of Kabul, and compelled him to leave Peshawar for Kabul without giving any weight to the report that the Afridis were blocking the Khybar Pass. Mohammad Amin Khan advanced to Ali Masjid and encamped there. The Afghans seized the opportunity and opened the attack from the heights by rolling down huge boulders upon the Mughal troops. Thereafter, they descended from the hills and attacked their enemy at close range. The imperial commander had to suffer severe reverses and losses. His son Mir Abdullah and his son-in-law Mirza Sultan lost their lives, while thousands of his troops were seized and made captive by the Afghans and sold as slaves. Finding his nerves shattered, he returned to Peshawer completely broken in physique as much as in spirits.

The success of Akmal Khan over Mohammad Amin Khan redoubled the enthusiasm of the Afghans to continue the struggle. A large number of tribal leaders including Khushal Khan the chief of the Bangash tribe unfurled the banner of revolt. This alliance between the two tribal leaders made Aurangzeb anxious. Realising the gravity of the situation, he degraded Amin Khan and ordered Fidai Khan, the governor of Lahore to march towards Peshawar to guard against the enemy's offensive. Shortly after, he recalled Mahabat Khan from the Deccan and entrusted to him the responsibility of dealing with the Afghans. Upon his failure to effect any improvement in the situation, the emperor sent Shujaat Khan and Jaswant Singh. In February 1674 Shujaat Khan entered Karappa

pass in the north-east of the Kabul river, to find himself arrayed against heavy odds. In face of a heavy downpour of rains and snow and guerilla tactics of warfare in the hilly tracts of Kabul, it was difficult for him to achieve success. He suffered terrible loss in men and money, and himself died fighting in the battlefield.[1]

The death of Shujaat Khan and the failure of Raja Jaswant Singh against the Afghans and the disaster that befell the imperial army, brought home to the mind of the emperor, that his presence in that region was absolutely essential. So huge preparations were made. The emperor started from the capital to quell the disaffection of the Afghans. He reached Hasan Abdal in June 1674 and stayed there for about one and a half years. During this period new plans for campaign were prepared. Fidai Khan was appointed viceroy of Kabul, Aghar Khan was called from the Deccan and sent to clear the Khybar region. Not only this, the emperor also ordered Prince Akbar to hasten along with Asad Khan to Kabul by way of Kohat.[2]

Thus, on Tuesday 24th Jamadi-us-Sani 1085 A.H./15th September 1674 Asad Khan was given a special robe, a sword and a horse and an elephant, and directed to proceed to Kabul.[3] Nothing has been recorded by contemporary and later historians with regard to Asad Khan's role in coping and suppressing the Afghan risings in the north-western frontier. It is certain that he was not a general and he could hardly be of any assistance to his sovereign in the campaign against the Yusuf Zais. Further, his lack of military talents is borne out by the fact that he never commanded any expedition. Nor did he give any positive proof of his qualities as a soldier or general. But it may also be urged with equal emphasis that the emperor did not give him an opportunity to display his talents. Had he been given a chance like Fidai Khan, Aghar Khan or Mukarram Khan, perhaps, he too would have proved his worth. But he was destined to share the misfortune of his master in his failure as to suppress

1. M. A., p. 131 ; Manucci, II, p. 297.
2. F. A., f. 69b ; M. A., p. 136.
3. *Ibid.*

either rebellion of Akmal Khan or giving peace to the north western frontier region. He returned with the emperor to the capital towards the end of 1675.

On 8th October 1676, he had the honour of being appointed the *wazir* of the empire. The Emperor gave him the badge of office, which he was to occupy i. e. a jewelled inkpot worth Rs. 50,000.[1] Since he was already fifty, other elderly nobles were not satisfied with his appointment. But mere age was not the criteria for such promotion. Nor did the consideration of race or religion weigh with the emperor. It were his qualities of head and heart which counted. He was liberal and generous, besides possessing rich experience in civil and revenue departments. But this did not silence other aspirants. Mahabat Khan the outspoken governor of Kabul angrily protested to the Emperor saying that, "Your Majesty has appointed a suckling like Asad Khan as the grand *wazir*. The consequences of the premiership of such an unmanly fellow might have reached Your Majesty's ears".[2] It is not difficult to refute this allegation from a man who throughout his whole life never achieved success on any front whatsoever. He only envied the superiority of Persian and looked at Asad Khan with contempt, thinking that he would not be able to shoulder the responsibilities of such a great office. In striking contrast to him, Asad Khan's cool temperament, subtle nature, and piercing intellect assured him of full support of his master and subordinates. Indeed, if we look at the problems, which confronted Emperor Aurangzeb, it would appear that he needed the counsel of such a person who had the ripe experience in the two important branches of the government i. e. *diwani* and *faujdari*

When he had looked after the affairs of *diwani* for two years at the capital, Asad Khan had strengthened his poistion by marrying his son Mohammad Ismail (Itiqad Khan) to the daughter of *Amir-ul-Umara* Shayista Khan. After having been honoured with

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1. M. A., p. 152 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 271 ; *Waqai Alamgiri*, p. 45 ; *History of Aurangzeb*, II, p. 69 ; *Moghal Kingship & Nobility*, p. 235.

2. Letter quoted in *History of Aurangzeb*, II, p. 69.

the title of *Umdat-ul-mulk*, Asad Khan was ordered to go to the Deccan in September 1677. Here a different panorama was unfolding itself. The Mughal armies under Jai Singh, Prince Muazzam, Khan-e-Jahan Bahadur Kokaltash and Diler Khan were busy against the Marathas, Ali Adil Shah and Qutb Shah. The problem of the Deccan was no more problem of recognition of the rights of the independent states, it was an open contest between the imperial power and the people of the Deccan, who were being backed up by the local potentates. Jai Singh's pride had been humbled ; Prince Muazzam was accused of incapacity ; Bahadur Khan was suspected to be in league with the Adil Shahis and had been censored for the reverses which the imperial army had suffered. As regards Diler Khan, he had arrived in the Deccan in June 1676 and was second in command. He was an Afghan and made friends with Bahlol Khan, the patron of the Afghan faction at Bijapur. Both of them complained to the emperor that Bahadur Khan had arrived at a secret understanding with the three Deccani powers and was averse to the Mughal success in that region. Not only this, Bahlol Khan even offered to conquer Hydrabad and crush Shivaji provided he received adequate reinforcements and was guaranteed security of his position and property. Diler Khan persuaded the emperor to accept the proposal. Consequently, Bahadur Khan was recalled in September 1677 and the charge of affairs of the Deccan was bestowed upon Diler Khan until the appointment of a new *subahdar* Since in the north-western frontiers, the Afghan rising had not yet been fully suppressed and the embers of discontentment and dissatisfaction against the imperial governors there still brewing, there was possibility of an Afghan rising of a similar type in the Deccan. Moreover, there was a lurking suspicion in the mind of the emperor that Diler Khan, in conjunction with Bahlol Khan might create trouble for the imperial government in that region. To guard against such an eventuality and to keep a vigilant eye over the activities of Diler Khan, the Emperor sent Asad Khan with a large army and suitable equipment.[1] Upon his arrival in the Deccan, Asad Khan found Diler

1. M. A., p. 161, 170 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 271 ; *History of Aurangzeb*, IV, p. 168.

Khan fully loyal to the imperial cause. Thus after satisfying himself and leaving instructions for others, he left the Deccan for the north.

During the next few years we find generals coming more into limelight than administrators. The emperor's trouble which, in fact began in 1679 only ended with his life. Problems baffled his imagination and he tried to concentrate all power into his own hands. He was not prepared to allow his Prime Minister (*wazir*) to play any significant role in politics. Even so Asad Khan, intensely loyal as he was to his master, never liked to go against his wishes. He, thus, began to perform his duties in a manner which instead of heightening the status of the office, lowered its prestige and dignity. For instanee, in 1679 while the Rathor rebellion was in full swing, instead of being asked to command an expedition against the Rathors or reshuffle the imperial economy, which had received a setback on account of the frequent rebellions in the north-west and the activities of the Marathas, the *wazir* was asked to put the '*tika*' on the forehead of Kunwar Ram Singh, the son of Raja Jai Singh.[1] By delegating this power to his *wazir*, the Emperor committed another mistake. The Rajput nobles, especially the Kachwahas, who considered the practice of putting the '*tika*' on their forehead by the Emperor as his special prerogative now onwards began to harbour suspicion against him. The delegation of this prerogative, though it apparently raised the status of the *wazir*, created a reverse impression on the minds of Rajput princes. This step was unwarranted and uncalled for.

On Sunday 4th April 1680 Shivaji died, leaving behind the Maratha kingdom utterly divided and distracted. So long as he had lived bitter rivalries and jealousies amongst the Maratha nobles remained under surface but the disputed succession to the Maratha throne, intensified groupism and divided the court into two factions. In the end, Shambhaji crowned himself king after driving away Raja Ram and he reopened the struggle against the Mughals with much fervour, but his position was by no means uneviable. Without

1. M. A., p. 176.

foreseeing its calamitious consequences, he took the indiscreet step of extending protection to Prince Mohammad Akbar, the fourth son of Aurangzeb, who had rebelled against his father and had been defeated and was being hotly pursued by the imperial troops. This provoked the ire of Aurangzeb who marched towards the Deccan to chastise him. As the Rathor rebellion was still in full swing he left Asad Khan and Prince Azim-ud-din at Ajmer to keep watch over their activities. Asad Khan remained there from 1681 to 1684 and thereafter he came to Ahmadnagar[1] where he paid his respects to the emperor and remained nearer to him. The same year occurred the death of his nephew (sister's son) Bahram, the brother of Jafar Khan and the father of Bahramand Khan. A year later i.e. in 1685, another great calamity befell him, when his mother died at Delhi on Wednesday 22nd Muharram 1097 A.H./9th December 1685. The Emperor sent for Asad Khan who made his appearance in mourning robes.[2] The feelings of grief on the part of the *wazir* were assuaged to a large extent, when in 1686 Bijapur was conquered and occupied and a felicitious chronogram "*zib shud masnad-e-wizarat*" (1097A.H./ 1686 A.D.)[3] was composed on the occasion, it betokened the Emperor's regard for him. The same year he was permitted to sit with crossed legs on a cushion in the royal presence. Khwajah Wafa, the *darogha* of the '*sukh sajja khanah*' (Steward of the department of cosy-beds) brought to him a *masnad*, a gold embroidered pillow (*takia-gah*) and a carpet (ornamented with gold embroidered figures) etc. In return Asad Khan gave to Khwajah Wafa, a robe and 1000 rupees as *Inam*,[4] which the emperor permitted him to retain.[5]

While the siege of Golkunda was continuing Qulich Khan was again and again striking at the iron walls of the fort, he was hit on his shoulder blade by a bullet. No sooner did the Emperor hear

1. M. A., p. 241 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 271-72.
2. *Akhbarat*, 22nd Muharram, 29th Julus ; M. A , p. 270.
3. M. U., Eng. Tr., I. p. 272 ; M. A., p. 279.
4. *Inam* : A present or gift.
5. M. A., p. 281.

of it, he sent Asad Khan to visit him.[1] After the death of Qulich Khan, the Emperor pressed the siege of the fort vigorously, but to his utter surprise, he was told that Prince Shah Alam was in league with Abul Hasan Qutb Shah, and that he was checkmating the imperial plans with regard to the conquest and occupation of the kingdom. But the fact of matter is that the Prince was trying to induce the enemy to sue for peace through him so that he may add another feather to his cap as against his younger brother Mohammad Azam, who had been given the credit of conquering the fort of Bijapur. But Azam's partisans dinned into the Emperor's ears the contents of Shah Alam's correspondence with the enemy.[2] Firoz Jung intercepted some letters of the Prince addressed to the Qutb Shah and handed them over to the Emperor who made up his mind to imprison the suspected culprit and his family. Accordingly he directed his *wazir* to perform this duty. Shah Alam's personal contingent was sent to the front on the pretext of repelling an unexpected attack and was directed to take up position round the Prince's camp. On the morning of 21st February, 1687 in accordance with a pre-concerted plan, Shah Alam with his four sons was invited to the Emperor's tent for consultation. After a few minutes talk with him, they were asked by Asad Khan, the *wazir* to step into the side room to listen to some secret instructions of the Emperor.[3] According to Saqi Mustad Khan the Prince went willy-nilly to the prayer-room, where he and his sons were stripped off their arms and politely told by Asad Khan that they should consider themselves prisoners.[4]

The imprisonment of Shah Alam removed one of the obstacles in the way of the conquest of the fort of Golkunda. The Emperor with the help of his Shia *wazir* Asad Khan his Shia paymaster general Ruhullah Khan, Saf Shikan Khan, the chief of the artillery, Salabat

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1. M.A. p. 289 ; *History of Aurangzeb*, IV, p. 249.
2. F A., f. 113a-b.
3. F A., f. 114a- 15a ; M. A., p. 293-95 ; M. L., II, pp. 330-34 : *History of Aurangzeb*, IV, pp. 430-32.
4. M. A., p. 295. Isardas Nagar says : "All the property stores, horses, elephants etc. of the prince were confiscated, and the clerks of the office were ordered not to use the title 'Shah' for the prince". F. A., f. 115a-b).

Khanand Ghairat Khan pressed his military operation against the fort with greater vigour. Braving the difficulties presented by nature and man, the Emperor occupied the fort on 21st September, 1687. Asad Khan's presence on the scene of warfare exercised a sober influence on the Persian nobles and prevented quarrel amongst them. It was due to him that his countrymen were able to retain and sustain their reputation for valour and devotion for the imperial cause. They could not be accused of partiality for a Shia kingdom.[1] The conquest of Golkunda brought another increase in the rank of Asad Khan. It was raised to 7000 *zat* and 7000 *sawar* (*haft hazari zat wo sawar*)[2].

The Deccani Kingdoms had been conquered and occupied, but the pacification of the country was a difficult task. Prem Nayak the ruling Berad Chieftain, who commanded 12000 cavalry and 1000 infantrymen, exercised authority from his stronghold at Sagar. He refused to surrender this vast strip of territory to the Mughals. Likewise, Siddi Masaud controlled the area lying south of the Tungbhadra. In other parts too independent Hindu and Muslim chiefs reigned supreme. True, that these chiefs were compelled to abandon their possessions, but even then the Mughals could not breathe a sigh of relief. Even so, during the next three years military operations against the Marathas reduced Shambhaji to narrow straits. But his capture and execution instead of solving the Deccan problem rendered it even more complicated. Aurangzeb found himself in hot waters but fortunately for him, Asad Khan and his son Itiqad Khan shouldered the onerous responsibility. In 1689 Asad Khan presented to the emperor his son's despatch announcing the conquest of Raigarh.[3] The Emperor was so pleased to hear the news

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1. Jadunath Sarkar unjustly accuses the Shias for their half heartedness in the siege of Golkunda (*Histroy of Aurangzeb*, IV, p. 433-37); Asad Khan was sent with prince Kam Bakhsh to bring reinforcements. While doing so he even risked his life, because according to the author of M. A. "The men could not advance one inch owing to the shower of musket bullets, rockets, *chadar* and *huqqa* (bombs) without being blown up or wounded." M. A., p. 295.

2. M. U., Eng. Tr., I. p. 272.

3. Aurangzeb renamed it as "Uttamgarh" F. A., f. 154a.

that he granted him a special robe and jewelled *jigha* adorned with heron's feather (*par-e-kalang*) and on this occasion the band played joyous tunes.[1] The courtiers too bowed before him and offered presents to him. And on 20th Safar 1101 A.H.,/23rd November 1689 Itiqad Khan himself waited upon the Emperor. He was promoted to the rank of 3000 and was presented a robe, a horse, jewelled quiver, a b w, rupees 3000 in cash and honoured with the title of *Zulfiqar Khan Bahadur*.[2]

A year later, on 19th Safar 1102 A.H./12th November 1690, Asad Khan was commissioned to chastise the Marathas on the other side of the river Krishna. The Emperor himself marched from Koregaon, 32 miles from Bijapur, to supervise the operations. Before his departure, Asad Khan was presented with an amulet set in diamonds containing a copy of the Quran enclosed in a case, a special robe and a horse worth 300 *muhars*. Asad Khan marched towards Nandiala and conquered the fort.[3] There he received orders to hasten to his son's assistance, who was besieging the fort of Jinji.[4] As he delayed in marching, prompt orders were issued to him to expedite his departure to the scene of operations. According to Saqi Mustad Khan, the Emperor thereafter wrote another *firman* with his own hand and in the open court said to the *Munshi*, "Asad Khan shows his eagerness to see his son but now when the latter is hardpressed, he is delaying and...it is easy to boast but quite another matter to act".[5]

This sarcastic remark which the Emperor made had a context behind it, which is very interesting. On some occasion, Asad Khan

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1. F. A., f. 154a ; M. A., p. 332.
2. *Ibid*.
3. M. A , p. 338 ; M. U. Eng Tr , I, p. 272 ; *History of Aurangzeb*, V, p. 40.
4. Zulfiqar Khan, the Mughal Commander had been detached from the imperial co rt at K regaon at the end of Nov. 1689. He marched by way of Raichpur, Karnaul, Nandival, Kadapa and Gramkonda, and then descended into the Karnatak plain (about June 1690) fig ting and capturing many forts on the way and reaching Kanjivaram in Aug and environs of Jinji in the beginning of September 1690. (M. U., Eng. Tr., I. p. 272 ; *History of Ginjee & its Rulers* p. 292; *History of Aurangzeb*, V. pp 68-69).
5. M A , pp. 352-53 ; *Raqaim Karaim*, f. 8b ; *History of Aurangzeb*, V, pp. 74-75.

told his friends, "the Emperor has not yet assigned to me any task if he did it, he would be able to see what a *Turk* can do"[1]. This was reported to the Emperor who annoyed with his prevarication exclaimed in the presence of Fazil Khan and Qabil Khan, the *darogha* of library, "Don't boast any more because, the pride of being a *Turk* is over"[2]. It was this remark, the Emperor quoted in his *firman*.

But in fairness to Asad Khan it may be remarked that the Emperor's sarcasm was uncalled for. The latter could not fathom the real cause of his *wazir's* delay in marching to Jinji. Asad had to overstay at Kaddappa because he had to organise the administration of the conquered region and restore peace and order there. Secondly, he had to wait for the arrival of Prince Kam Bakhsh. And finally, the *wazir* circumspect and cautious as he was, had to complete his preparations before entering the hostile land. These considerations have escaped the attention of the official historian and those who have followed him.

On receipt of this pinching *firman* Asad Khan moved on. He met Prince Kam Bakhsh on 21st Muharrum 1103 A.H./4th October 1691[3] and the two marched towards Jinji, where they reached on 16th December 1691.[4] Ever since his arrival in early September 1690, Zulfiqar Khan had been striving hard to devise means to reduce the fort, but his efforts had met with little success. Jinji was not a single fort ; it was a group of forts enclosed on three sides by steep hills which were difficult to be scaled. Its strong walls with formidable bastions mounted with guns gave it a commanding position. Thus its defences appeared to be impregnable. On the other hand, the Mughals were deficient in the art of siege and Zulfiqar did not command an adequate number of troops or heavy artillery. Add to this, was the activity of light Maratha cavalry.

1. M. A., p. 352-53 ; *Raqaim Karaim*, f. 8b ; *History of Aurangzeb*, V., pp. 74-75.

2 Hearing this from the emperor, both of them (Fazil Khan and Qabil Khan) recited it. M.A., p 353.

3. M. A., p. 344 ; *History of Aurangzeb*, V, p. 75.

4. *Akhbarat*, 5th *Rabi-us Sani*, 35th *Julus* (R. Y.) ; M. A., p. 344 ; M. L. II, p. 418 ; *History of Aurangzeb*, V., p. 75.

So the task which lay before the Mughal commander was not easy. Therefore after his arrival near the fort Zulfiqar Khan, instead of opening the siege, sat down before it. For the moment his reputation as a general who had attained victory at Raigarh, seized Shambhaji's family and attained unbroken success at the Kaddappa and Arcot districts created much consternation among the garrison, but he could not compell the besieged to surrender the fort. He assessed the situation and requested the Emperor to send 200 maunds of powder and 500 soldiers from Madras. Soon the demand increased to 500 maunds of powder and 500 grape shot, 500 soldiers and 30 gunners (September 1690). He asked the English and the Dutch to supply him powder and gunners. But to add to his consternation in November 1690, the three Maratha chiefs such as Nimaji Scindhia, Manloji Pandhare and Nagoji Mane who had deserted the Mughals joined Raja Ram with 2000 horsemen. They were assigned the charge of the defence at Chakrakulan. Three months later Raja Ram himself arrived at Jinji to second the efforts of his officers and to secure the assistance of the petty Hindu princes of the eastern coast with a view to organise a confederacy against the Mughal armies, posted in Golkunda and Bijapur. But thanks to the discord and dissension amongst the Hindu chiefs his plan did not succeed. Only his first cousin the Raja of Tanjore helped him in defending the fort.

Zulfiqar Khan had never expected that the Marathas would be able to stand against the superior military resources of the Mughals. Their roving bands delivered surprise night attacks, cut off the lines of communication, seized the convoy of provisions and reduced the Mughals to a sorry plight. Famine stared them in the face. The desertion of the Deccani *mansabdars*, who had accompanied him, now left him almost isolated. Upon this he appealed to the Emperor to send reinforcements, provisions and money etc. The latter quickly responded and deputed Lashkar Khan to take necessary steps to that end. The arrival of Syed Lashkar Khan gave much needed relief to Zulfiqar Khan.[1] A little later, he summoned Ali Mardan Khan, *faujdar* of Kanchi. He strengthened his position

1. Dil., f. 99b.

by throwing supplies inside his camp and then started to lay hand on the kingdom of Tanjore and Trichnapalli, which is situated mor than 120 miles from Jinji. After levying contributions from th *zamindars* of the South Karnatak, he returned to his camp. H fought many battles with the Marathas and every time he defeate them and put them to flight.[1] At the end of August he marche towards Tanjore and by December 1691 he conquered Trichnapalli.

Such was the position of the Mughals at Jinji when *wazi* Asad Khan and Prince Kam Bakhsh arrived there to relieve Zulfiqa Khan. Encamping at Saydun, 120 miles from Jinji, Asad Khan sen Rao Dalpat with abundant provisions and treasures to Jinji.[2] H ordered Rao Gopal Singh Chandwar, Malhoji Ghorpare, Sidd Salim Khan and Savant Devi, to march towards the fort of Jinj and extend necessary assistance to Zulfiqar Khan. Passing throug the hilly and rough tracts and dense jungles, they reached Kanch where they met Ali Mardan Khan, the *faujdar* of the town. Ra Dalpat marched in his company a stage further and encamped nea the fort of Wandiwashi, 24 miles from Jinji. After a brief halt, Ra Dalpat again resumed the journey. On the way he received a lette from Zulfiqar Khan, which was delivered to him by Matlab Khan informing him that he himself was to welcome him. The arrival o fresh reinforcements, money and provisions brought back lif among the invaders. Shortly after, Zulfiqar Khan, appointed Ra Dalpat to command the right wing and himself rode out to recon noitre the fort. When the enemy once more became active, Ra Dalpat's division was sent to encounter them. Rao Dalpat defeate them and put them to flight with heavy losses.[3] Still the situa tion remained fluid.

All the while the prince and the *wazir* lay encamped severa miles away from the scene of action. But when the gravity o the situation was brought home to their minds, they moved from Sa dun and arrived Kanchi. Zulfiqar Khan and his associates hastene to welcome them. They arrived in their company near the fort o

1. Dil., f. 99b.
2. Dil., f. 103b.
3. Dil., f. 104a.

Jinji.[1] Zulfiqar Khan now renewed the siege in 1692. He pitched his camp opposite the Pondicherry gate of the fort near a hillock named '*Ali Madad*'.[2] Asad Khan and Prince Kam Bakhsh encamped three miles away from him, beyond the northern gate, on the road leading from Krishnagiri to Singhavaram[3] hill. An enclosure was thrown round the prince's camp. It was guarded by Ismail Khan and other local auxiliaries. His enclosure lay on the north-west of the fort, in the direction of the Karnatakgarh and opposite the fort of Jinji. For purpose of safety each Mughal outpost was encircled with trenches and earth maunds. Despite all these precautions, the gate of Shaitandari could not be closed with the result that the garrison could move out freely and procure provisions whenever they liked. Kakar Khan held the outpost Vetvalaur (Anwal) from where the supplies reached the fort. Every night the Marathas very audaciously threw rockets into the prince's camp which compelled Zulfiqar Khan to post some men there to guard it. One night a Maratha force, about five thousand strong, sallied out of the north gate but was repulsed by the Mughal troops. But the consternation caused by this raid was so great that Zulfiqar shifted the prince's camp to a site by the side of his own. The two camps now were protected by the one and the same enclosure.

The place at the north gate, vacated by the prince was assigned to Syed Lashkar Khan. Thereafter Zulfiqar Khan decided to attack the Chandrayandurg. He laid out trenches opposite the gate of the fort and bombarded the hill and the Pondicherry gate but without any success.[4] In delivering this attack his soldiers had to face many hardships. Bhimsen, the author of '*Nuskha-e-Dilkusha*' who was present on this occasion and who has given an eye witness account writes, "God knows what policy he adopted ? Having placed the guns at the fort of the Chandrayangarh hill, he fired the

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1. M. L., II, p. 418 ; Dil., f. 105a.

2. Bhimsen who was present there, says ; "From that hillock the balls from the cannon reached the fort very well". Dil., f. 105b.

3. But Bhimsen mentions it 'Sholingdpuram' (Dil., f. 105a.).

4. Dil., ff. 105b-106a.

guns from both sides. The rain fell with excessive severity. Everyday we had to come and go over the hills. Grain was dear and the soldiers had to spend days and nights in the trenches amidst great hardship. Besides this, Asad Khan and Zulfiqar Khan, removed Rao Dalpat from the position from where he had been guarding the prince's camp and posted him to a trench where Mohammad Momin (*darogha* of artillery) had constructed a court-yard—a strong balcony in the centre of the hill. In the whole of the camp twenty four tanks could be seen from the portico. In the rainy season the entire tract of land looked like a single tank."[1]

After some time when Zulfiqar Khan and Rao Dalpat returned to the camp, and subsequently when they were proceeding towards their trenches, a large group of Marathas descended from the hill and attacked the outposts of Mohammad Momin. Zulfiqar Khan and Rao Dalpat immediately marched to his assistance. But they found it difficult either to move on horseback or foot. So they stopped where they were. Fortunately, however, the soldiers who were in the trenches took the enemy by surprise, slew them in a large numbers and pushed away the rest. Thus Rao Dalpat and his men recovered their lost position and repaired the damaged out-posts.[2]

At the end of the rainy season, the position of the Mughals became still more untenable because of the arrival of more than 30,000 Maratha *barghis* from western India. This huge army had been raised by Ram Chandra, the deputy of Raja Ram in the Maharastra. It was led by celebrated generals like Dhanaji Jadav and Santaji Ghorpade and it was bubbling with enthusiasm.[3] To counter this new threat, it was decided to withdraw from posts and concentrate at a single point, and so orders were issued to various officers to this effect. Syed Lashkar Khan and Kakar Khan arrived soon but Ismail Khan Maka who was posted on the western side of the fort could not do so because he had a longer distance to cover and had to collect his soldiers scattered over an extensive area.

1. Dil., f. 105b-106a.
2. *Ibid.*
3. M. L., II, p. 415.

Soon after their arrival the Maratha bands entered the Kanjivaram district and struck terror in the hearts of the people who abandoned their home and fled in different directions. Now Santaji Ghorpare took up his position near the Kaveri pak. Ali Mardan Khan, the Mughal commander moved out of Kanjivaram to check his further advance but he was defeated and captured. Later on he was released on payment of a heavy ransom.[1] Another Maratha contingent led by Dhanaji Jadav moved from a different direction fell upon the imperial troops encamped round Jinji and caputred Ismail Khan Maka and his 500 men.[2] Thus the Marathas were completely successful in gaining control over the Karnatak region, comprising of Kaddappa and Kanjivaram districts. In 1693 Keshar Ramanna was appointed as *subahdar* of the region and was posted there with 1000 horse and 4000 foot.

It is true that in none of these campaigns Asad Khan directly participated, not because the Emperor had deputed Zulfiqar Khan to conduct the campaign, although he was much junior to some of the officers associated with him on this occasion, but he had been explicitly instructed to play the part of generalissimo and therefore from the very beginning he cautiously watched the turn of events taking place on the front to which he had been posted. However, taking into consideration his unique position, we cannot hold him responsible for the failure of the campaign or for lack of enthusiasm. There were other reasons for the failure of the Mughals in presenting a common front or making a concerted effort against the Marathas. Pre-eminently it was due to lack of unity amongst the Mughal generals. One example may be cited when Zulfiqar Khan heard that Ismail Khan Maka had been surrounded by the enemies, he immediately sent word to Rao Dalpat asking him to march for his assistance but the Rao replied that "some body else should be sent to take charge of the trenches so that he may go to his aid".[3] In this way the indifferent attitude of Zulfiqar Khan and of the prince joined to the

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1. D.I, f. 108b ; According to Khwafi Khan he was released on payment of two *lacs* rupees. M. L , II, p. 416.
2. Dil., f. 107b ; M. L II, p. 416.
3. D.I., f. 107a.

lack of unity among the Mughal generals occasioned the loss of the rich districts of Kaddappa and Kanjivaram. Moreover, Zulfiqar Khan held no consultations either with his father Asad Khan or with Prince Kam Bakhsh. Had he acted judiciously the country would have been saved from the hands of the Marathas.

The revival of the Maratha activity in the neighbouring region reduced the Mughals to a miserable plight. Instead of being aggressors, they had now turned into defenders. The line of the source of supply of provisions was completely sealed and famine began to rage in the imperial camp. Even their communication with the base was completely cut off by the enemy.[1] Newsletters from the court stopped coming. Add to this, was the constant fear of surprise attacks and consequent loss of life and property. On the top of it was the apprehension of the Emperor's censure. No wonder that Zulfiqar Khan, Asad Khan and Prince Kam Bakhsh were overtaken with nervousness.

The imperial camp presented a tragic picture of strained reaction and conflicting objectives among the leading officers. Prince Kam Bakhsh was foolish and capricious. He was swayed by the counsels of his worthless and young favourites.[2] Asad Khan was astute and touchy. He felt much humiliated when the prince asked him to travel on horseback all the way from Kaddappa to Kanjivaram. And the prince on his part was chagrined to find that the person appointed to assist and advise him was treating him as a suspect and keeping a vigilant eye on his movements and activities.

Therefore, to sabotage the plan of Zulfiqar Khan he opened secret negotiations with Raja Ram who welcomed the dissensions in the royal camp with a sense of malicious satisfaction. But the secret leaked out and Zulfiqar Khan tightened his vigilance. He instructed Rao Dalpat to keep guard on the prince's camp and hired spies to furnish him relevant information with regard to his surreptitious manoeuvrings. Further, when Asad Khan reported to the Emperor

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1. M. L., II, p. 420.
2. Dil., f. 107a ; M. L., II, p. 419 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 272.

about the prince's behaviour and conduct, he was directed to be much careful and cautious. Kam Bakhsh was forbidden to go out for riding from the camp or to admit or send anybody from his camp without the permission of the *wazir*.[1] The new restrictions proved irksome to the prince though it was given out that they had been taken to safeguard the security of his person. Kam Bakhsh in sheer frustration made a bid to escape from virtual captivity but his attempt failed. His surveillance was tightened still further.[2]

As if the sporadic night attacks of Santaji Ghorpare and Dhanaji Jadav were not enough to distract the mind of Asad Khan and his son, circulation of the death of the Emperor rendered confusion worse confounded . Prince Kam Bakhsh once more became restless and active.[3] His bitterness against the *wazir* increased manifold thanks to the whisperings of his favourites and supporters. He was pursuaded to plan the capture of his enemies, proclaim himself emperor, seek the support of the Marathas and escape to the fort of Jinji,[4] failing which they told him that he would be blinded and sent as a prisoner to the new Emperor.

In consonance with their suggestions, the prince one night made preparations for his flight along with the ladies of his *harem*. Palanquins and elephants were assembled but before he could start he was intercepted by Asad Khan who alerted Zulfiqar Khan of the nefarious plot which had been hatched. Asad Khan himself hastened to the prince and asked him, "What is the reason for the assemblage of conveyances at this hour of the night ?" The prince replied, "The spies have reported that the enemy has planned to deliver a night attack." The *wazir* said, "The report is fake. You should have not taken this step without informing me". Finding the *wazir* adamant in his attitude and ready to offer armed resistance, the prince dismissed his retinue and gave up the attempt.[5]

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1. M. A., p. 356-57a ; M. L , 419 ; Dil., f. 107a; M. U. Eng. Tr., I, p.272.
2. *Ibid*.
3. Dil ,f. 107a ; M. A , p. 357-58 ; M. L., II, p. 419 ; *History of Aurangzeb*, V. p. 83.
4. *Ibid*.
5. Dil., f. 107b ; *History of Aurangzeb*, V, p. 83.

Throughout the night, Zulfiqar stayed in his trench ready to strike a blow and seize the prince. In the absence of any further information, it was quite natural for him to feel anxious. Having waited for a few hours, he summoned all high nobles for consultation and advice.[1] The following morning a meeting was held in the camp of Asad Khan. The nobles with one voice urged him to guard the prince more rigorously, saying, "What face shall we show to the Emperor if we cannot set the prince right ? The evil should be nipped in the bud. Let it not occur again. It would not be proper to abandon the trenches and to concentrate the entire army in the rear, round his and the prince's camp." But even this task was not easy. Zulfiqar Khan was compelled to nail his big guns and abandon them. Thereafter fighting through enemy's ranks at the close of the day he reached Asad Khan's camp.

While Asad Khan and Zulfiqar Khan were taking measures to guard the imperial camp from the attacks of the enemy, the foolish prince prompted by the advice of silly courtiers continued to hatch plots against them.[2] They now suggested to him to arrest the two generals at the time of their next visit to him and then grasp supreme power. But the news of this plot leaked out. Fed up with constant fighting and intrigues of the prince, Zulfiqar Khan, who had reached his father's camp at night, held consultations with him and they decided to arrest the prince. Accordingly, they rode forthwith to Kam Bakhsh's camp. Arriving before the audience hall unceremoniously entered the canvas enclosure, seated on their elephants and knocked down the screens. The other nobles remained standing as silent spectators, for they were well aware of the prince's treacherous role. The servants of the prince foolishly discharged bullets and arrows at Asad Khan and his son and raised much hue and cry. There was confusion everywhere.[3]

Asad Khan threw away his mask and appeared in true colours. Till now he had waited and watched the activities of the prince and had done nothing to bring him to his senses. Defeat at the hands

1. Dil, f. 107b; *History of Aurangzeb*, V, p. 83.
2. *Ibid* : M. L., II, p. 420.
3. *Ibid*.

of the Marathas and constant failure to stem the tide of their raids, together with the difficulties which the imperial soldiers were experiencing, compelled him to resort to this alternative. Indeed, there was no other way out. Moreover, he had received the Emperor's order to send the prince to the court with Mukarram Khan.[1] Thus he was doing nothing unwarranted or illegal. His overwhelming influence, quick movements and intelligence took Prince Kam Bakhsh by surprise. The latter lost heart and overcame with the sense of utter helplessness, he came out of his *harem* by the main gate. He had hardly advanced a few steps when Asad Khan's musketeers seized him by his arms and led him bare-footed to the *wazir*. Rao Dalpat who was sitting on an elephant could not bear the humiliation to which his master's son was being subjected. He promptly pushed his elephant forward and with great ability lifted the prince up on his *haudah* and sat behind him as his guard. He brought him to Asad Khan's presence.[2] Unable to control his anger, the aged minister scolded him saying, "The rumours you have heard are false. Our Emperor is safe. Why have you done so? You have disgraced yourself and involved me and covered my grey hairs with disgrace.[3]

Taking advantage of the confusion caused by the arrest of the Prince Kam Bakhsh, the Maratha free-booters sallied out and delivered a few surprise attacks upon the imperial camp.[4] Considering it unwise to leave the prince in his own camp, Asad Khan brought him to that of his own and treated him with great courtesy. He saluted him and served dishes with his own hands. Syed Lashkar Khan was appointed with his soldiers to guard him. The ladies of the prince's *harem* were also brought and were lodged in a separate tent.[5]

1. Dil, f. 111b; M. A., p. 359 ; M.L. II, p 420 ; *History of Ginjee & its Rulers*, p. 113.

2. Dil., f. 108a.

3. *Ibid.*

4. M. L., II, p. 420.

5. Dil., f. 108a ; M.A., pp. 358-59 ; Manucci, II, p. 316 ; Khwafi Khan has not given the details, See M. L., II, p, 420 ; Prof. Sarkar mentions that, the *wazir* called prince Kam Pakhsh a dancing girl's son ; but this sentence is not mentioned in '*Nuskha-e-Dilkusha*' of Bhimsen who was an eye witness to the whole affair. Had Asad Khan said so he would have certainly mentioned it.

At daybreak Zulfiqar Khan summoned all the officers of the army, great and small, to explain to them the Prince's treacherous role vis-a-vis his own position. He assured them about his safe custody and won them over to his side by lavish distribution of gold and presents. In this manner Asad Khan and his son were able to effect unity and harmony amongst the generals and the soldiers.

With this episode ended the fear of internal hostility and divided counsels. A great obstacle had been removed. But the trouble was not yet over. Shortly after, news arrived that Santaji Ghorpare who had scored victory over Ali Mardan Khan, the *faujdar* of Kanjivaram, had not only ravaged and plundered the regions through which he passed but that he had also established his sway over it and was marching towards Jinji to strike a final blow at the imperialists. Asad Khan and his son now found themselves in a very precarious and perplexing situation. But they did not lose courage and began to form plans to repel the Maratha threat. After Santaji Ghorpare had arrived at Jinji, for several days there occurred irregular skirmishes between the opposite parties. The Marathas missed no opportunity of raiding the imperial camp and delivering attacks on the foraging parties. Bhimsen, an eye witness of these events writes, "All the elephants, horses, camels and material that had been with Asad Khan were plundered by the enemy. Santa arrived at the fort of Jinji in pride and boast fulness and waged war hotly. The enemy exceeded 20,000 while the imperialists had only a small force with them and many of them were engaged in guarding either Asad Khan's camp and equipage or that of the prince. The Prince's sesvants were hostile and they never left their camps to assist their brethren. Man Singh, son of Rup Singh Rathore and other imperial officers concealed themselves in their tents on the pretext of illness. Zulfiqar Khan, Rao Dalpat, Sarfaraz Khan Deccani, Fath Ullah Khan Turani, Rao Kalu (Kanhoji) Maratha and a few other *mansabdars* with only 2000 horsemen came to offer battle to the enemy".[1] Despite their slender resources the imperialists won every battle which they fought against the Marathas. The enemy suffered defeat after defeat whenever it came to clash with the imperialists.

1. Dil., f. 108b.

But these victories proved to be futile, because with the onset of rains the imperial army found itself surrounded by the Maratha *barghis*. Famine began to damp the spirits of the Mughal soldiers. Grain became scarce and it was not available at any price. So, Zulfiqar Khan had to march with his division to procure food and fodder from Wandiwash, 24 miles north-east of Jinji. He arrived there at night. His Turani soldiers under the cover of darkness fell upon the helpless *banjards* and carried off whatever they could. It was difficult to control them. In the morning of 5th June, 1693 Zulfiqar collected unplundered grain and set out on his return march. Hardly had he covered some distance than Santaji Ghorpare with 20,000 men blocked his passage at Desur, 10 miles south of Wandiwash and surrounded his entire party. Zulfiqar Khan put up stiff resistance and succeeded in taking shelter in the fort of Desur where he remained encamped for two days. The Marathas now brought a larger army to deliver a more telling attack on him. Bhimsen records, "They fired so many muskets that the soldiers and *banjards* of our army were completely overpowered. The enemy aimed its bullets at the elephants on which the imperial commanders were mounted. Many bullets hit the elephants of Khan Bahadur, but Rao Dalpat and his Bundela soldiers bodly advanced to clear the way. I, who was standing behind Rao in his *haudah* seized the shield and held it before the Rao for his protection. Although '*Shri Bhagwan*' is the protectr of everyone, two bullets successively struck the shield near my shoulder. We then reached a rice-field, many of the oxen and camels of the convoy got struck up in mud ; horses moved with difficulty. Our musketeers ran short of powder and our artillery ran short of munitions.[1]".

Rao Dalpat's men on account of mud and unevenness of the road on the right side, fell apart from the main army. Only 80 troopers remained with him.[2] This gave a fine opportunity to the enemy and they sent their matchlockmen to the top of a hillock from where they began to shoot at the imperialists reducing them to a miserable plight. Rao now halted for a while to extricate

1. Dil., f. 109a.
2. *Ibid*.

the bullocks and camels from the mud, while the rest of the army marched ahead. Rao risked his life and continued to repel the attacks. Fortunately for him, at this critical moment arrived Sarfaraz Khan Deccani with five or six thousand troops and assisted Rao in driving away the enemy. The Marathas reappeared and opened their fire again but they finally withdrew. Undoubtedly on this occasion Rao and his Bundela soldiers showed remarkable courage and bravery by rescuing Zulfiqar's division.[1]

But the provisions and fodder brought by Zulfiqar Khan and Rao Dalpat proved insufficient for the thousand soldiers and animals inside the Mughal camp. Their condition became so deplorable that every night the Mughal soldiers in large numbers would go to the Maratha camp where the provisions were plentiful. They would bring cooked bread and grain and return to their quarters by day break. Nor did the Marathas prevent any enemy soldier from doing it. Every day from the dawn to dusk the Marathas would appear before the imperial camp making demonstrations and then withdrawing.[2]

In the midst of these impelling conditions, it was but natural for Asad Khan to think of abandoning the campaign, breaking up the camp and withdrawing to Islampuri. With inadequate resources, starving troops and scarcity of munitions it was impossible to reduce the fort of Jinji. All of his efforts and those of his son had proved fruitless. At length, to save himself from being censored by the Emperor, Asad Khan made secret overtures of peace to Raja Ram. Jadunath Sarkar's statement that he even offered to pay a heavy bribe to him on condition of being allowed to retreat to Wandiwash casts a slur on the honesty of the *wazir* Asad Khan. But it is not corroborated by any historian contemporary or later. Bhimsen does not refer to it; Khwafi Khan does not record it, and the court historian Saqi Mustad Khan is silent about it. Thus it would be uncharitable to presume that Asad Khan bribed Raja Ram. On the contrary, there is ample evidence on record to show that the

1. Dil., f. 109b.
2. *Ibid*.

state affairs in the Maratha camp were far from satisfactory.[1] The Maratha court was divided into two groups. Though Raja Ram's generals and ministers pressed him to continue the war, plunder the Mughal camp which was starving, exploit the situation in his favour and establish his sway before the arrival of fresh troops from the headquarters, but he and his band of loyal supporters were averse to this plan. They had grown weary of the prolonged struggle and needed respite. They were keen to arrive at an amicable settlement with the enemy.[2]

No wonder that Asad Khan and his son Zulfiqar Khan were able to influence Raja Ram and they succeeded in pursuading him to agree to an armistice on the condition that he would allow the imperial troops to withdraw to Wandiwash. In return, the *wazir* promised to recommend to the Emperor that he should conclude peace with the Marathas. After this, both the father and son became busy with planning and arranging the withdrawal of the imperial troops. But Rao Dalpat did not like this. He urged Zulfiqar Khan not to withdraw, and offered to present him gold and silver worth Rs. 40,000 to meet the expenses of the army. He wanted to save the imperial prestige and honour of the *wazir*. While the Khan was still giving thought to his proposal, one day his artillery men loaded their baggage, left the camp and sent him word that as they were dying of hunger, they are going to Wandiwash. It was difficult to fight the Marathas without a heavy park of artillery; so it was decided to raise the siege and withdraw. Commenting on the tragic situation Bhimsen remarks, "There was no opportunity for heroism, no space for charging, no possibility of slaying and no legs to run away".[3]

After waiting in vain for imperial orders Asad Khan and Zulfiqar Khan withdrew to Wandiwash. They left Jinji with the prince on noon of 22nd or 23rd January, 1693. He had to face many hardships on the way due to the scarcity of food and fodder. Most of the horses, camels and transport animals perished.

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1. *The New History of the Marathas* by G. S. Sardesai, Bombay, 1947, Vol. I., p. 332.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Dil., f. 110b.

Most of the soldiers had burnt their baggage and taken to their heels without caring for their relatives or friends. The nobles and officers abandoned the stores which were plundered by the Maratha soldiers. Thus bereft of his following Asad Khan arrived at Wandiwash on 26th January 1693.[1]

It brought immense relief to the *wazir* when it was reported to him that Qasim Khan, the newly appointed *faujdar* of Kanjivaram was coming with abundant stores and large reinforcements.[2] The *faujdar* also brought letters from the court with the news that the Emperor was alive and well. There was great rejoici g in the imperial camp. Music was played, drums were beaten, alms were distributed and arrangements were made for dancing and merry-making. While these celebrations were still on, orders were received from the Emperor that Asad Khan and Prince Kam Bakhsh should return to court and that Zulfiqar Khan should stay where he was.[3] When Asad Khan arrived at Nusratabad Sagar, he received another order to stop there and send Prince Kam Bakhsh alone to the Emperor at Galgala.[4]

Without ascertaining the truth and holding enquiry into Prince's conduct during the Jinji campaign, the Emperor extracted from Asad Khan a huge sum of money to compensate for loss of the prince's stores and artillery which had been abondoned at Jinji. To add insult to injury, two *mahals* of the *wazir's jagir* were attached for recovering this amount.[5] But subsequently when the Emperor heard the other version and had been convi ced of the bonafides of the aged *wazir* he summoned him to his presence. Asad Khan arrived at the court on 21st Jamadi I, 1105 A. H./Monday 8th January, 1694.[6] According to the author of *Maasir-e-Alamgiri*, when he stepped at the spot from where greeting were offered to the Emperor, Multafat Khan the '*darogha-e-khawasan*' who was standing nearby whispered "forgiveness has sweetness which vengeance has

1. Dil., f. 110b.
2. D l , f. 111a.
3. Dil., f. 111b.
4. Dil., f. 112a.
5. *Ibid.*
6. M. A., p. 364 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 273.

not". The Emperor replied, "You have recited this verse at the right moment". Looking kindly at his old minister, he ordered him to kiss his feet. Then he raised his head and treated him with favour.[1]

During the next four years Asad Khan remained at court at Islampuri. His son Zulfiqar Khan remained busy in conducting the siege operation at Jinji. When in the year 1697 he fell ill and became so weak as to be unable to sign his name,[2] the work of the civil department was coming to a stand-still. Upon this the Emperor directed Inayet Ullah Khan to sign the papers on his behalf. By December he recovered his health and the same month he had the greatest pleasure of his life when he placed before His Majesty Zulfiqar Khan's despatch announcing that the imperial forces had succeeded in reducing the fort of Jinji.[3] In reward for his excellent administrative work, Asad Khan's rank was increased by 1000 *zat* and *sawar* to *haft hazari* (7000 *zat*/7000 *sawar*). In 1699-1700 when the Emperor left Islampuri to renew the struggle against the Marathas, he appointed Asad Khan to guard the imperial family.[4]

On 4th *Rabi-us-Sani* 1113A.H./28th August 1701 in accordance with the royal order Asad Khan came to see the Emperor.[5] It seems that the latter had purposely called him to discuss the siege of Khelna and to apprise him of his future plans. During the progress of the siege the Emperor again summoned him and conferred upon him the title of *Amir-ul-Umara*; gave him a jewelled dagger, 4000 *asharfis* and ordered him to command the Mughal troops besieging Khelna(6th *Shaban* 1113A.H/26th December 1701).[6]

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1. M. A., p. 364 ; M. U. Eng. Tr., I, p. 273.

2. M. A , pp. 390-91.

3. In the name of Zulfiqar Khan Nusrat Jung, Ginjee was renamed as Nusratgarh ; (*History of Ginjee & its Rulers*, p. 347).

4. M. A., p. 408 ; M.U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 273 ; *History of Aurangzeb*, V., p. 160.

5. Dil., 136a ; M.A., p. 441 ; *History of Aurangzeb*, V, p. 179 ; *Akhbarat*, 4th *Rabi-us-Sani*, 45th *Julus* (R.Y.).

6. M. A., p 450 ; M. L., II, p. 492 ; Dil.,f. 136a ; *Waqai Alamgiri*, p. 46 ; *The Army of the Indian Mughals*, p. 289 ; *Akhbarat* 6th *Shaban*, 45th *Julus* (R.Y.).

Asad Khan's vanguard under Fathullah and Hamiduddin crossed the defile before sunrise, captured the hillocks facing the fort from where arrows could be shot into the fort of Khelna. Guns were mounted on these hillocks and the houses of the garrison were put to fire. The siege dragged on for five months. The *wazir* shared the sufferings and miseries of the imperial officers and soldiers. He fell ill in February 1702. The Emperor ordered that until he regained his health, he should be allowed entrance into the audience hall from the inner side of the hall of *diwan-e-mazalim* and to sit in railing (*Kathara*) at a distance of one cubit (*zira*) from the steps of the royal chamber.[1]

Hardly had he recovered his health than he heard the news of the death of his son-in-law Bahramand Khan.[2] His nerves were shattered and he had now no more stamina to bear the strain of a prolonged campaign. The Emperor ordered Kam Bakhsh to go to console him and bring him to the court. Upon his arrival the Emperor "soothed his wounded heart with consolatory words" and presented him with special food and jewelled *sarpech*.[3] While on his return march from Khelna in June 1702, one day, after crossing the drain the *wazir* could not find a single dry spot on which he could pitch his camp. He, therefore, set up a small *raoti*, but at night it rained so heavily that the *raoti* twice fell over his head. For the rest of the night his servants stood holding the canvas sheets, tied at four corners with ropes and thus saved the man whose health was failing. By this time Asad Khan had grown too old to bear the strain of such arduous campaign in the hilly tracts and deep ravines of the Konkan. But he dared not defy the wishes of the Emperor who prized him most. And if at the fag end of his life the Emperor had any person in whom he had fullest confidence, it was Asad Khan. During the next two years the old *wazir* remained in his constant attendance.

When the imperial camp was in Puna in December 1703,[4] it was a sheer chance that the *wazir* for the first time in his life fell a

1. M. A., p. 460 ; M. U., Eng. Tr., I, p. 274.
2. M. A., p. 461.
3. *Sarpech* : An ornament in front of a turban.
4. M. A , p. 475.

prey to misunderstanding. Inayet Ullah Khan *nazim* of *Khalsa* and *Tan* pitched his camp on the highest tract of land.[1] Consequently, he had to pitch his quarters on a low land. After some time his eunuch Vasant sent a man to Inayet Ullah to ask him "to get out of the place, so that the Nawab's tent may be pitched here". The Khan replied, "Very well, please wait till I have found some place to take up my quarters". But the eunuch uttered unpleasant words. The Khan, without creating any more fuss, shifted his camp to some other place. But somehow this matter was reported by Ikhlaskesh to the emperor, who immediately ordered Hamiduddin Khan Bahadur to go and tell *Amir-ul-Umara* Asad Khan that, "It was not proper. You should go to your former place or some other spot. The man who had set up his tent first should remain there".[2] The Khan conveyed the order to *Amir-ul-Umara* who because of his feeble health delayed its compliance. But, next day when the *Amir-ul-Umara* came to His Majesty at the time of audience court, the emperor ordered Ehtmam Khan to take the *Amir-ul-Umara* to Inayet Ullah Khan and make him beg pardon for what had occured. Asad Khan carried out the instructions. It so happened that when the *Amir-ul-Umara* Asad Khan called on Inayet Ullah Khan,[3] the latter was in his bathroom, so *Amir-ul-Umara* sat down in his *diwan-e-khana* in which there was no carpet. The Khan quickly came out. The *Amir-ul-Umara* stood up and took him to his own tent. He presented him one '*than*' of cloth and pacified him.[4] He was so generous and kind-hearted, and in the later days of his life also never wanted to annoy anyone.[5]

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1. *Akhbarat*, 11th *Muharrum*, 47th *Julus* (R. Y.); M. A. pp. 475-77.
2. *Ibid*.
3. Saqi Mustad Khan who also reached there, writes: "Amir Khan sent me to convey the message to Inayet Ullah Khan that such an order has been issued, but it is advisable that you should quickly petition the Emperor to postpone the visit of *Amir ul-Umara* My going at mid-day and the visit *of Amir-ul-Umara* to the Khan's house happened at the same time. My message remained undelivered". M.A., p. 476.
4. M. A., p. 477.
5. When Aurangzeb fell ill his youngest son Kam Bakhsh wrote to the *Wazir* Asad Khan to hand over the treasure to him (Kam Bakhsh); the *Wazir* replied, "May god preserve His Majesty's life. If it happened or otherwise and he died, I am constrained to make over the treasure, the property, and the whole of the money to that one of the emperor's four sons who

His liberal and generous conduct during the later days of his life is reflected in his attitude towards the mission of Sir William Norris to the court of Emperor Aurangzeb. It would be worthwhile here to examine the circumstances in which Sir William Norris had been sent on an ambassadorial mission to the Mughal Court. Piracy in Indian waters was the major problem which agitated the mind of the Mughal Emperor as much as that of the agents of the East India Company. The English pirates known as 'Interlopers' plundered with equanimity cargo boats of their countrymen as well as those of Indian merchants, causing tremendous loss to both. The latter made incessant complaints to the imperial officers, but they found themselves helpless to do anything because they had no naval force. And though the East India Company had a number of guns and other means, its officers were handicapped by the fact that they had no instructions from the principals in England to deal with the 'Interlopers'. Thus they found themselves in a very awkward situation, because the Mughal officers could not distinguish between the genuine English traders and pirates who sailed from England. They held the local English officers responsible for the nefarious activities of their countrymen.

In the last quarter of the 17th century the Mughal Emperor was much pre-occupied with his internal difficulties and therefore was not in a position even to think out a solution of the problem. His first and foremost concern was to liquidate the independence of the surviving states of Bijapur and Golkunda and to wipe off the Maratha disaffection. All his resources were concentrated upon the execution of his military and political plans. This indifference on his part was responsible for the increasing cases of piracy on the eastern and the western coast. The majority of sufferers were merchants of Surat. Unfortunately, however, its monopoly of trade security was threatened. Moreover, the 'Interlopers' proved to be a source of great danger to the English settlements in India. Though the majority of these pirates were Englishmen who were indifferent to the

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succeeds in ascending the throne and in crowning himself, and to him I shall render an account every thing". Manucci IV, p. 241.

interests of their countrymen much less of Indian merchants. In these circumstances the Mughal officers, who received constant complaints from Indian merchants about the high-handedness of the pirates had no other alternative, but that of taking arbitrary steps and of holding the East India Company responsible for the mischief. But the Company did not accept this charge. It disowned the pirates and expressed its inability to deal with them. It was, however, anxious to see that piracy was suppressed. But the Emperor had no means to accomplish the same. As regards the Company, it had only means of self defence in guns and gunners. But this force was not sufficient for any other purpose. In fact, the Company's ships were not also adequately equipped as to be utilized for the suppression of piracy. On the western coasts they had no depot where they could keep their arms and ammunitions. Their only business was to carry the cargoes or receive them at Surat or Bombay and transport the goods in the shortest possible time to the destination. Nor they had any specific instructions from London to chase the pirates and destroy them. On the contrary, they were asked to avoid them. In short, both the Mughals and the English expected from each other that either of them would take the initiative in the matter. In contrast to the English, it was very difficult for the Mughal Emperor to turn his attention from the internal problems to the external one with which he was only indirectly concerned.

It is related that in September 1695 a notorious pirate named Henry Evory captured two cargo boats.[1] One of them *Fath Mohammadi* was of considerable value ; it belonged to Abdul Ghafur who had suffered a similar loss a few years back. While the other ship *Ganj-e-sawai* belonged to the Emperor himself. It was the largest ship in the port of Surat. It was commanded by captain Mohammad Ibrahim. It was returning from her usual voyage to Mecca where it had transported the emperor's yearly presents and pilgrims.[2] It had 1200 persons on board. It was seized by the pirates between Bombay and Daman. The pirates treated with barbaric indignity

1. *History of Aurangzeb*, V, p. 343.
2. M. L, II, p. 421 : *History of Aurangzeb*, V, p. 343.

lady passengers of the highest rank.[1] Several of them threw themselves into the sea or slew themselves with daggers to preserve their chastity.[2] Every bit of silver and jewels was seized and *Ganj-e-sawai* was abandoned to find its way to Surat. The ship was reported to have had treasures worth 52,000,00 of rupees, silver and gold, and the produce of the sale of Indian goods at Mecca and Jeddah.[3] The pirates's crew are said to have received the prize money amounting to pounds 1000.

When the report of the seizure and plunder of the *Ganj-e-sawai* reached Surat, there was an outburst of excitement and anger amongst the Muslims. The local English merchants and officials were held responsible for this heinous outrage. The Mughal governor Itimad Khan was compelled to post guards over the Company's factory and warehouse to protect the English factors from the hands of infuriated mob. As the English were suspected of having a hand in the aforesaid incident, President Annesley and his colleagues were arrested and the European trade in the port of Surat was completely suspended.[4] Upon this Annesley and Sir Johon Gayer (at Bombay) lodged a protest and demanded that the English factors be released. But the Emperor rejected their demands and demanded that the English, Dutch and the French should score the seas in pursuit of the pirates and provide regular escort to pilgrim ships going to Mecca. Till these demands were satisfied European trade was ordered to remain suspended and the prisoners to remain under custody. Apprehending a great loss, Annesley accepted the demands and agreed to provide escort to the pilgrim ships between Surat and Jeddah. As a result of it, the port of Surat was reopened to the English trade and the prisoners were set free. And for sometime, no incident of this type occurred.

But shortly after the Company's servants found it difficult to abide by the conditions imposed by the Emperor. Their own sailors

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1. M. L., II, p. 422.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*

began to play foul. The crew of one of the ships turned pirates and they killed their capatin. This matter was so serious that Gayer and Annesley sent strongly worded appeals to the Governor and Committee of the Company at London to take adequate measures to suppress piracy and safeguard their lives. They also pointed the danger of reprisals and loss of trade. The authorities at Fort St. George also wrote to the Court of Directors about the activities of the pirates near Calicut. They reported that pirates came from New York and that the majority of them were English. They drew attention to the injury done by them to the Indian merchants and its inevitable reaction upon the local authorities against the English. The officers of the Company in London gave the consideration to their complaints, concluded peace with France and appealed to the British government to protect their agents from pirates. They proposed to the government that three men of war should be sent to St. Mary's and Cape Commorin, whence they should sail along the coast of Malabar, Bombay and Surat, visit all the ports and seek information about the pirates and suppress their activities and then they should return to England.

But before these men of war could appear in Indian waters and deal with them effectively, the pirates, once more became active. After the *Ganj-e-sawai* affair was over, friendly relations were established between the English and Itimad Khan the governor of Surat. Itimad Khan died in February 1697 and was succeeded by the corrupt and vindictive Amanat Khan. Perhaps, in concert with the new governor, captain William Kidd 'The Grand Pirate', with a view to undermine the position of the English factor, robbed a ship called *Quedah* bound from Bengal for Surat. It is related that the vessel had on the board a cargo valued at £30,000 of which a considerable portion belonged to Mukhlis Khan, an important noble of the court. A few months later, one of the best ships belonging to Husain Hamidan, armed with 50 guns and manned with 300 men was seized off St. John's[1] by three pirates on her voyage to Jeddah. The treasures, goods and horses on the board of the ship valued 18,50,000

1. On the Coromandal coast.

rupees. It is said that each man of the crew received £800. These two occurrences compelled the new governor Amanat Khan to issue orders that "No one should be permitted to leave the town, that no provisions should be taken to the English ships, and that all the seaborn traffic should be stopped." Amanat Khan also forbade attack on the English factory and promised to forward local complaints to the Emperor. As regards the Muslims who had suffered tremendous loss, he drew up a separate petition to the effect that "ye infidella had robbed and killed thu true believers and they would forbear all public worship in their mustack till the king would order them satisfaction".

Shortly after the receipt of the petition, the Emperor ordered Asad Khan, *the wazir* to issue a '*farwana*'[1] to the governor of Surat. "In the document Aurangzeb emphasised the losses inflicted on the Indian merchants by the pirates ; pointed to the ineffectiveness of the English ships in affording protection and ordered the governor of Surat to exercise pressure upon the English, Dutch and the French to make them pay compensation to the Emperor's subjects. He declared that "unless written guarantees were not given that the pirates would stop their activities the English, the Dutch and the French would not be allowed to reside and trade in his dominions".[2] Acting upon the Emperor's order the governor of Surat gave an ultimatum to the factors of the three nations demanding compensation for the losses sustained by the Indian merchants and asking that they should give a clear undertaking to clear the seas and provide sufficient protection to the pilgrim ships. The Indian merchants were forbidden to have any dealings with the Europeans and guards were posted over the factories. The Dutch and the Frenchmen were quick to come to terms with the Mughal authorities. They paid compensation for the loss and signed guarantees for safe navigation between the gulf of Mokha and the Persian Gulf. Amanat Khan now demanded that the English should also give a

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1. *Parwana* : An order ; a grant or a letter under royal seal ; a letter of authority from an official to his subordinate.

2. See, *The Norris Embassy to Aurangzeb*, by H. Dass, p. 23.

similar undertaking for the southern Indian seas, from the Coromandal coast and Bengal to Java and Sumatra. Upon this President Annesley and his Council asked for time to obtain instructions from Sir John Gayer at Bombay. On being apprised of the seriousness of the situation Gayer arrived at Surat and advised Annesley neither to make the payment to the Governor nor to give any guarantee for the safety of the southern seas. He told him to assure the local authorities that the English had furnished convoy for two years and would be willing to do so for another year and that of all the European nations England was the only one to send her men of war to suppress piracy. He told him that he was quite ready one to discuss the matter with the local authorities. But the fact of the matter is that Gayer avoided meeting personally the governor Amanat Khan who from the very core of his heart disliked the English. The reluctance and he delay on the part of the English factors to give an undertaking enraged Amanat Khan who immediately despatched several hundred soldiers to blockade the English factors at Surat, threatening to put them to death. All the persons connected with the factory, such as the brokers and the Indian servants were arrested and publicly whipped and imprisoned. These drastic measures and the firm attitude of the governor compelled President Annesley to discuss the matter at a general council which decided to give guarantee similar to that which had been given by the Dutch and the French. After this the Emperor demanded that the Europeans should compensate Husain Hamidan and the other merchants for the losses they had suffered. But the Mughal governor explained to him that the European companies at Surat could not be asked to pay compensation to the Indian merchants because the pirates were "men of all nations" and they did not acknowledge the authority of any sovereign. Aurangzeb was satisfied and temporarily removed the ban on English Company's trade. But the new edict did not improve the position of English trade at Surat. It had almost came to an end. It was at this critical moment of Company's fortune that the President Annesley was replaced by Stephen Colt on 13th May 1698.

The new President had also to face the same problems of piracy and compensation. Husain Hamidan and the other Indian

merchants continued to demand compensation. Stephen Colt bribed the Mughal officers and successfully pursuaded them to relax the ban and help him in settling the claims of the Indian merchants. When these secret transactions between the local Mughal officers and the President of the English Company had been brought to the notice of Husain Hamidan, he began to regard the London Company as the biggest pirate and he pressed his demands further. The new governor of Surat Diyanat Khan renewed the question of claims and compensation. Upon this, Sir John Gayer rebutted the charge of piracy against the English, appealed to the Emperor and the Governor not to believe in the allegations without holding a proper inquiry. Consequently, Aurangzeb ordered Diyanat Khan to use his authority and prevent any disturbance to the Company's trade at Surat and also to see that Husain Hamidan's claims were met. As to the second part of the order, it could not be implemented because President Colt denied the responsibility of English for such occurrences. He emphatically told the governor that it was impossible for him to meet the demand without consulting the authorities at London. The doubtful attitude of the President compelled the Mughal Governor to imprison John Gayer and some other employees of the London Company. Thereafter a strong representation was made by the Governor to the Emperor that despite the repeated orders the Company had not paid debts.

As a matter of fact, the possibility for any settlement seemed remote. The situation was further complicated when an English ship supposed to belong to London Company seized Abdul Ghafur's ships one of which was sailing from Mokha and the other three were carrying considerable sums of money. Add to it, were the complaints of the Imam of Mokha that he had not yet received compensation for the losses of goods and money in Husain Hamidan's ship. On the top of it, was the changed attitude of the English, the Portuguese and the Dutch who were helping the Marathas with men, money and ammunition, and thus foiling the efforts of the Mughal general Sidi Yaqut to capture the coastal forts of the enemy.[1]

1. M. L., II, p. 423

This stiffened Aurangzeb's attitude towards the Europeans. Their recent activities compelled him to recall Asad Khan, the *wazir* from Islampuri to the camp. In August 1701, he held consultations with him on many issues. The details of this meeting having not been recorded but it can be presumed that he must have discussed with him the line of policy to be pursued against the Europeans and the Marathas. For, in early December 1701 the Emperor issued a proclamation through the *wazir* Asad Khan that all the settlements of the English should be seized and their trade should be stopped. Accordingly, Diyanat Khan seized some of the Company's factors at Surat and forbade supply of provisions to them. He also confiscated goods amounting to over Rs. 1,40,000 which were given to Abdul Ghafur as a part of compensation due. But the claims of Husain Hamidan had yet to be satisfied. In February 1702 Prince Sultan Mohammad Azim-us-Shan, the governor of Bengal, attacked the Company's settlements of Patna, Rajmahal and Kasim Bazar. Elsewhere too the goods of the English factors were seized and their trade was stopped. All these troubles which the English factors had to face could have been avoided had they come to an amicable settlement through the *wazir*. They could have asked for remuneration for policing the Indian ocean, for making a concerted action against the pirates but they did not. On the other hand, they made little effort to establish friendly relations with the Mughals by sending support to them against the Marathas who were being backed up by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French.

Conditions began to change after 1701. The old London Company was replaced by the new East India Company in accordance with the Royal Charter of September 1698. Before the inception of the new Company it was decided to send an ambassador to the Mughal court for promoting friendly commercial relations between the two countries and Sir William Norris was deputed for this purpose. Shortly after his arrival in India, Sir William opened negotiations with Asad Khan and requested him to inform the Emperor of his arrival. He also requested him to give instructions to the *faujdars* through whose provinces he would pass on his way to the court, for safe conduct for himself, his retinue and for the presents which he was bringing for the emperor. While doing so, he

adopted the diplomatic procedure as obtained in other countries. But Mohammed Syed pointed out to him that he had committed a grave mistake by sending such a letter to the *wazir* through an ordinary peon and that the letter would not be accepted. He advised him to send another message through someone of a higher status, but adequately attended and provided with suitable presents for the *wazir*. But the envoy rejected the suggestions and after consulting John Pitt he sent an information of his arrival to the Emperor through the local news-writer.[1] Thus he failed to secure a *parwana* from the *wazir*. He tried other means but he failed in his efforts. He then turned to Imam Quli Beg, a resident of the court, to obtain for him the *wazir's hasbulhukm* and *dastak*[2] and to bring it to Masulipatam as soon as possible. No sooner had Asad Khan received suitable presents from Imam Quli Beg on behalf of the British envoy, than he assured him that he would inform the emperor of latter's arrival and of his desire to meet him. Imam Quli on his behalf, assured Sir William that after he had met the Emperor he would be escorted back safely to Masulipatam. The Emperor ordered Asad Khan to arrange for Norris's safe conduct to the camp and Imam Quli was commissioned to take *hasbulhukm* and *dastak* to Masulipatam.[3]

But owing to the continuance of war conditions the local officers could not make proper arrangements for Sir William's safe conduct. Consequently, he decided to sail for Surat and from there to go to the Mughal camp. Norris's decision alarmed the local Mughal officers. They began to fear that they might be charged with negligence and disobedience. Therefore, they opened correspondence with Sir William assuring him of their services and flattering him for his discretion. But the ambassador was not the man to be taken in by sweet words. He protested and reported their conduct to the *wazir* Asad Khan and his son Zulfiqar Khan.

Asad Khan promptly responded to the communication he had received from Sir William and he tried to persuade him to change

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1. *The Norris Embassy to Aurangzeb*, p. 172.
2. *Dastak* : A pass or permit.
3. *The Norris Embassy to Aurangzeb*, p. 182.

his mind and not to travel by sea to Surat and from there by land to the imperial court. He pointed out the impropriety of the step he was contemplating by saying "dear brother give ear to me and come to land yet my word to ye King may not prove lye". In other words, the *wazir* thought that his prestige was at stake. He explained to the English envoy that it was not his fault, but it was that of local officers who had failed to carry out the imperial instructions. And thus by playing their game, he should not "lower himself and make his enemies rejoice". The *wazir* closed his letter with the warning that if the ambassador persisted in his resolve, he might risk the displeasure of the Emperor who might not grant him the necessary *dastak* for the journey from Surat to the Court. Further *wazir* sought to impress upon John Pitt that as the ambassador had only recently arrived in India and was unfamiliar with the custom and etiquette of this land, it would not be advisable for him to change the original plan.

William Norris acknowledged Asad Khan's letter expressing his appreciation for his friendship and kindness. But he explained that he had many obstacles in covering the journey by land. He had already sent his baggage and equipment by ship and while he himself was just going to board the ship, he received the last despatch. However, with the exceptional courtesy of a seasoned diplomat Sir William wrote back to say "Your Highness will be more fully satisfied of the necessity I lay under of going to Surat where I have the happiness to see you, which words cannot express how much I desire. The delays and disappointments I have met with here have been more irksome because they kept me so long from the most noble victorian and great Asad Chawn whose friensdhip I shall esteem dearer than my life".

Sir William boarded the soumers at Masulipatam and reached Surat where he was accorded a great reception by the officers of the new Company. During his stay for few weeks at Surat he was given different types of suggestions about his audience with the Emperor. He was told to visit Asad Khan, but that he should not expect a return visit because the Emperor never permitted any of his minis-

ters or *umara*[1] to have any conversation with the European or other distinguished strangers without his permission. Pereira pointed out to him that the Dutch envoy whilst in emperor's camp had not only visited the *wazir* and other important ministers but had refused the invitation of one *amir* to visit him because he had not obtained the prior permission for the same. Further, he told him that as far as he could remember the whole expense of the Dutch envoy in carrying on the negotiations amounted to rupees two lacs. In the end, he advised the English envoy to negotiate only with that minister who is appointed for the purpose and that he must strictly limit his visits as to maintain his dignified position.

Sir William left Surat on 24th January 1701 on his way to the imperial camp and after facing many hardships he reached Brahampuri. He informed Asad Khan of his arrival. The *wazir* sent a messenger intimating his great pleasure at the news and informing him that he was arranging a better and more convenient camp for the ambassador on the other side of the river. During his three weeks stay at the court Sir William tried to win over some of the Mughal officers quite close to the emperor so that he could attain his object. He also strove hard to take into confidence some of the eunuchs to elicit information about the Emperor and his servants. But all this could hardly facilitate attainment of his objective. In the end without seeing Asad Khan he saw the Emperor on Monday 28th April 1701, but he failed to create desired impression on his mind.

Without going into other causes of Sir William's failure in his mission, it may be pointed out that he fell a victim to wrong advice in so far as to abstain from making friends with the great *wazir*. Indeed it was the game of the some of the factors like Thomas Pitt who were closely connected with the old Company to see that he did not gain his object. The latter had successfully persuaded Asad Khan to safeguard the interest of old Company. Likewise there were persons like Yar Ali Beg and Ruh Ullah Khan at the imperial court who prevailed upon envoy to by pass *wazir* and they led him to think that his direct contact with the Emperor would produce the desired result. This places Sir William in direct contrast

1. *Umara* : Plural of Amir (noble).

with Sir Thomas Roe. The latter was a great diplomat. Though in the beginning he had faced the opposition of Asaf Khan, eventually he succeeded in conciliating him and his sister Nur Jahan. Sir William on the other hand committed the fatal blunder in ignoring Asad Khan and his son who were held in great esteem by the Emperor. Nor did he possess the foresight and judgment of offering the suitable presents and thereby attach them to his cause. Had he maintained cordial attitude towards the *wazir*, he would have secured the requisite *firman* for the benefit of the new Company. Thus even after heavily bribing the Mughal officers at all levels and winning over the most important of them, it was not possible for the foreigners to get things done in their interest. The *wazir's* personality and status carried decisive weight in the administrative framework. Without his acquiescence no final decision could be taken on any matter and without his approval no order could be issued.

Very little is known about the last three years of his career. Perhaps he remained with his master in this critical period of his life and shared his disappointments and failures. However, in his last will Emperor Aurangzeb mentioned that "There is not, nor will there (ever) be any *wazir* better than Asad Khan".[1] And really even after the death of Emperor Aurangzeb his sons Prince Mohammad Azam and Muazzam Shah allowed him to hold the office that he had held for years together without any break.

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1. Letter quoted in *History of Aurangzeb*, V, p. 262. Aurangzeb in another letter to his son, writes : "Although I shall leave behind me a very competent *wazir* who has come to the front in my reign and whom I have protected, yet what good will it do, as the four pillars of the empire, viz. my four sons, will never leave that poor man to himself to do his work" (*Ahkam*, No. 11).

Conclusion

The foregoing survey of the lives of *wazirs* in the second half of the seventeenth century amply reflects the shape of the institution of *wizarat* which received the final touch at the hands of the Mughal Emperor Akbar and which excepting a brief period, remained unchanged during the reign of Aurangzeb. The importance of *wizarat* was very fully realised by Shahjahan who allowed the institution of *wikalat* to fall into insignificance. After the death of Asaf Khan, he revived the tradition of appointing a *wazir*, who could bear and share the administrative burden. With the overall expansion of the empire, the problems had considerably multiplied and it was a difficult task to hold the canopy. In moments of crises the incumbent of this high office was called upon to share the responsibility and relieve the Emperor of his anxieties. Like Sadullah Khan the best *wazir* of Shahjahan, the *wazirs* of Aurangzeb too stood up to his expectations ; they were alive to their duties and were fortunate enough to bask under the sunshine of royal favour.

Whatever might have been the role of Muazzam Khan in the kingdom of Golkunda after he came into contact with Prince Aurangzeb in the Deccan, it did not take much time to realise that his future benefactor was not in any way inferior to him. It is therefore, not surprising that his personal ambitions never came into clash with those of his master. Each was indespensible to the other. Before and after the war of succession Muazzam Khan remained fully loyal to him. But after his accession to the throne Aurangzeb found himself in most critical position. His suspicious mind and the necessity to crush Shah Shuja impelled him to keep Muazzam Khan far away

in the east. Thus the latter had to pass the rest of his life in perpetual conflict which was pre-eminently military. Though he continued to enjoy the status and the emoluments of *wazir*, he could neither influence nor control the politics. Nor could he give proof of his financial acumen. His legal and formal duties were performed by his deputy and other officers at the capital. The same holds true of his successors. Jafar Khan remained in the office for a short while. Though he had the competence to make some contribution to the department of *wizarat*, perhaps because of his growing age he could not do anything. Asad Khan's talents were mostly used in the Deccan. Looking from this angle, it becomes clear that the Emperor attached too much importance to the political problems in which he was deeply engrossed.

Though we get detailed account of the military campaigns in which the *wazir* participated so actively but the record of their financial activity, which was their principal domain, is comparatively meagre. This may be due also to the absence of a historian like Abul Fazl. Moreover from the very beginning Aurangzeb had to be on his guard against the tendency of the *wazir* to assert his position over that of the sovereign. The Emperor was keen to reign as well as rule. He wanted to see his influence felt in the distant provinces of the empire. It was he who issued the minutest orders. He kept his eye on every detail. He wanted to check with a strong hand the fissiparous tendencies which had been gaining momentum in practically all parts of Hindustan. In short, the immediate problem was that of the protection of the integrity and existence of the empire and the task bristled with difficulties. Though the Emperor had not the vision of his illustrious predecessor Akbar, he was gifted with ample amount of courage and determination. Like Akbar he was desirous of taking all credit to himself. Precisely for these reasons he did not allow his *wazir* to aggrandize himself and act independently. Nor did his *wazir* at any time even in the most critical juncture dared to question the authority of his master. With the mighty and all powerful Emperor over him the *wazir* preferred to shelve his personal ambition and lend full support to him.

Jadunath Sarkar in his work on Aurangzeb has stressed the religious intolerance and his hatred against the Shias. But a close

study of the history of his reign unfolds a different story. The Emperor was wise enough to confine his religious feelings to himself. They were not to influence his state of affairs. Had it not been so he would not have conferred the high office of *wizarat* on the Persians who were Shias. Muazzam Khan, Fazil Khan, Jafar Khan and Asad Khan, the most prominent, intelligent and influential *wazirs* of Aurangzeb were Shias. Compared to some of the Turani nobles, they were more loyal and devoted to the Emperor. In short, while appointing his *wazirs*, Aurangzeb was guided more by his practical considerations than by his religious outlook. Thus very much like his predecessors Aurangzeb also did not allow his religion to militate against the interests of the empire. This may sound paradoxical to some but in the light of the known and accepted historical facts it is difficult to give credence to the traditional view. It is patent that only the most experienced and competent persons who had served either as *mir bakhshi* or had risen from one post to another were appointed as the *wazir* irrespective of their religious affiliations. As the Persians were past masters in the art of administration and finance, they were freely patronised and ennobled. Aurangzeb's own mother was a Shia and no historian has recorded that he hated her. Nur Jahan was a Shia and he passed several years of his life as a prince under her fostering care.

Another important aspect which emerges from the study of institution of *wizarat* in this period is the unflinching loyalty of the *wazir* towards his master and his empire. Being the two wheels of the same machine which controlled the diverse races of Hindustan, the Mughal Emperor and his *wazir* depended upon each other for the fulfillment of the ambitions they cherished in their hearts. Both worked within the same framework and they could not afford to fall apart. This is something exceptionally commendable because we seldom come across such fidelity in the history of the neighbouring countries.

But this was only the brighter side of the shield. On the other hand, we notice that on account of the excessive centralisation of power into the hands of the Emperor, his *wazir* could not make any contribution to the growth of the department of *wizarat* nor could

he introduce any change in the revenue administration. Times had changed, reforms were overdue but the department of *wizarat* was allowed to remain the same as it was in the days of Akbar. Obviously this explains the cause of the economic unrest in the period under review. Had the talents of the *wazir* been utilised in putting the department on sound footing the empire would have been saved from the economic disaster, which threatened its very existence. For such a task the presence of the *wazir* at the Centre was necessary, specially when the means of communications were slow and primitive and it was not so easy for the officers at Agra or Delhi to get necessary instructions in time.

Yet in another direction also we notice a slight gap. The *wazirs* of Aurangzeb because of their military pre-occupation could not find time to turn their mind towards cultural pursuits. Like the *wazirs* of the previous period they could neither patronise men of letters nor could they ever make an effort to promote any aspect of medieval culture. Though by themselves they were steeped in learning and were highly sensitive to their environment, no piece of literary work, no monument of outstanding merit, not a single piece of art stands to their credit which could create an impression that they continued the cultural traditions of their predecessors. Muazzam Khan was a millionare and yet his cultural contribution is nil. Fazil Khan and Jafar Khan were old hence were completely devoid of aesthetic sense. Asad Khan had money but he preferred to maintain a large *harem*[1] than to spend his wealth on men of erudition. We can not blame them for their inaesthetic sense. Perhaps in the existing conditions no fruitful work was possible. With the death of magnificent Shahjahan the era of fine art was over. In the face of internal or external problems, soldiers, warriors and statesmen found more pleasure in the music created by the clash of swords than in the compositions of the poets and the songs of the musicians. The Emperor and his *wazirs* were all alike. Seated on saddled

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1. Sir William Norris, the British ambassador to the Mughal empire, mentions : "He has 30 wives and 890 other women with him and has change of 3 or 4 every night each, I think might be spared considering his age which is 90 yeares old."

horses, girdled with two swords they moved from one square to another of the political chess board, defeating and subjugating one rival after another until they had conquered all. The *wazirs* of Aurangzeb were small satellites who revolved round the magnificent personality of the Emperor. They could neither rise above the environment nor could they impress it with their individuality. They were merely a part of the machine which rolled on continuously with the single aim namely that of conquest and more conquest.

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